

INDIA'S DESTINY

by
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**KITAB - MAHAL
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By the same author

1. India's Challenge to Christianity
2. Marching Millions
3. Indian Gateway to Poetry

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To
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
one of those rare spirits who lives
above the fog of communal bitterness,
and thinks in an unfrontiered
world.

PREFATORY NOTE

Writers have many lives to live, many parts to play. In this War Soviet writers have played strange parts, indeed, but with a distinction rather symbolical of writers! Well, a writer may have to be a fortune-teller. But he must try to be a distinguished one. And a distinguished fortune-teller always begins with a story.

Distraught with thirst a woman sat at a well. Her multi-pleated red skirt and her saffron veil were travel-worn, faded and frayed. Perhaps, she was a homeless pilgrim wandering in quest of something she could not find. But her silver hair and her mein had a compelling majesty. There she sat looking at the well with parched longing. Would someone come with a jar and a cord and draw water for her?

Across the fields not far from her she saw a woman passing. She wore a white *khadi* sari with a wide saffron-white-green border. A shining brass bucket was swinging in her right hand as she walked with youthful tread singing the Sanskrit words of the *Vande Mataram*. "Daughter!" hoarsely the woman at the well called out. "I'm dying of thirst!" "But," the younger woman replied, "I have no cord." She turned and came towards the well.

Just then from the other side another woman in a white *salwar*, red *kurta*, and green veil was going by. Softly she sang Iqbal's Urdu song *Hamara Hindustan*.

and flicked the grass with a coil of stout cord as she went along. "O daughter!" cried the woman at the well. "Give me your cord. With this girl's bucket and your cord I can draw water and quench my maddening thirst!" She came to the well. "How long have you been here waiting?" she asked tenderly. "Here," said the other fastening the cord to the bucket, "in a trice you'll have all the water you can drink. This well has very sweet water, mother!" She let the bucket into the well.

Two or three other women had joined the group by now. "*He Rama!*" exclaimed the woman with the bucket, "this cord is about six cubits too short!.....Has any one another piece?" "Yes, yes," answered the new-comers making their presence felt. "Here are two lengths of cord, tie them together and you'll have enough." At that fateful moment something ominous happened. A black charger came into sight. The rider was a white woman in *khaki* breeches and shirt. "Hey!" she called out, "what are you doing with that bucket and cord? Sell them to me. I'll give fifteen rupees for the bucket and ten for the cord." She showed them a dazzling handful of bright silver coins. "Come on, how long will you take to decide?...Whose are they?...Here, see, here's the money!" "O!" groaned the thirsty woman, "O! give me...a little...water!"

They forgot everything. One grabbed her bucket. The others grabbed their pieces of cord. They stood in front of the rider trying to strike a bargain. The white woman turned her black steed towards the road. Behind

her went the other women. "Give me twenty rupees for my coil of cord and pay her the same for her bucket!" said one. "But, surely, the brass bucket is worth more?" asked the rider digging her spurs into the horse's flanks and turning off the road into the woods. The women followed at a run, still higgling. On and on they went, stumbling, panting, cursing, not knowing whither they went.

The rider came to her castle at the edge of the forest. She rode in and ordered her sentries to let no one in. The women came bickering among themselves. They called out. They banged on the iron gates. There was no answer save the dismal echo of their own voices. It was fast growing dark for the sun had set two hours ago. "How shall we get back?" they asked one another in dismay. And they fell to quarrelling. They blamed one another, said ugly things. They tried to find the way back..... but...it was dark.

Like the woman distraught with age-old thirst India sits at the well of liberty. When will her daughter-communities return from following the rider of the black horse? When will they unite their material, mental and moral resources in an act of devotion? INDIA'S DESTINY is just an attempt to follow the road that led to disaster so that the way back may be found. Every honest Indian, whatever his name or sign, wants all deadening deadlocks to end. A new chapter of India's history must soon begin. That chapter must be entitled *Brotherhood*. It must be new in many ways. It must do justice to every group and section. It must not be furnished with inter-communal prejudices. We cannot

be free if some are bound. If some are miserable, we cannot be happy. We cannot make progress if some amongst us are kept back. *Freedom for all and all for Freedom!* must be our guiding star in the momentous days to come.

*Jubbulpore,
Easter, 1944.*

C. M.

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HYMN TO LIBERTY

O LIBERTY ! by all the Nations sought,
Thou who for all hast thy salvation wrought !
Enlarge our hearts with truer love of thee,
For there we'd build thy great Fraternity !

This ancient land looks up with tear-stained eyes
To catch the signal in those clouded skies
Of thy glad sway, love-sceptred Liberty !
Its valiant messengers O ! let us be !

Anoint our eyes to see a comrade's needs,
Inspire our love to speak in mighty deeds,
Save from eclipse our many-splendoured Day
While terror-seized usurpers slink away !

And with thy blazing blood-red banner there
In anguish beckoning us to do and dare,
With conquering shout we'll brave the savagest blows,
Break through the barricade and rout the foes !

With joy-cleans'd souls in life, in death we'll stand
One brotherhood of heroes of this land,
Dethrone all tyrants, the oppressed to free,
Proclaim to all the world thy Victory !

—Cyril Modak

CHAPTER I

HINDUSTAN—LAND OF THE INDUS

PALMHISTORY is an absorbing pastime. It enlightens while it amuses. It dissipates all despair. It gives one the gift of prediction. Let us try and read the destiny India carries on her palm. For instance, her prominent Mount of Venus indicates that foreign nations will always surrender to her captivating charms. Her Mount of Jupiter shows that although there are long periods of suffering under foreign rule, she will always vanquish her captors. Her Life line is very encouraging. It points out two glorious periods in the past (possibly those of Chandra-gupta and Akbar) and an unbroken age in which racial fusion, cultural synthesis, linguistic co-ordination, inter-communal co-operation will produce that perfect national integration which shall be the crown of her long and eventful life.

We miss a great deal of excitement and education from our reading of History because we consider it a tiresome chronicle of kings, of stupid wars and more stupid treaties, and the agony of dates. If, on the contrary, our village schoolmasters and college professors helped us to recognise that History is the fascinating story of dynamic social processes ; of social groups living and toiling, aspiring, struggling and achieving, meeting new problems and new-comers, adjusting and reconstructing their ways of life and thought, then, indeed, we should discover in Indian History not only pulsating life but a vital continuity. We would no longer make the absurd historical blunder of thinking of Hindu India and Muslim India and British India. We would be aware of India only and Indians facing new situations and reacting to them, sometimes masterfully, sometimes diffidently, but always with a purpose.

We find, then, that the orthodox history text-books have not told us the truth about ourselves. We are a richly mixed race ! Even

the Hindu-Muslim contacts began twelve centuries ago. They began when Hindustan was Hindustan. They began in an atmosphere of friendly goodwill. Hindu traders made friends with Muslim Arabs coming for trade. Muslim refugees flying from religious persecution found shelter and hospitality in India. In the early part of the eighth century A. D. Hajjaj bin Yusuf, Governor of Iraq, turned out, as Governors sometimes do, to be a monster abhorred for his cruelties even by Muslims. His cruelties drove some persons of the house of Hasham to the desperate step of leaving their native land for ever. Some of them landed on that part of the western coast of India, called Konkan, and others to the east of Cape Comorin. The descendants of the former are Nawayats, of the latter the Labbes¹. Surely, the Nawayats and Labbes are the product of inter-marriage and, as such, symbolise the blend of Hindu and Muslim stock.

¹ Rice : *Mysore and Coorg*, p. 353.

Gradually, Muslim influence increased. The Hindus in South India welcomed Muslim traders. They were given numerous facilities to acquire land and settle down. There is no record of hindrance in the way of the Muslim's practice of his religion. The Muslims on their side behaved courteously, and although their preachers carried on zealous missionary propaganda, no cause was given for disruption between the two communities. Strangely enough, a Muslim was allowed to sit next to a Nambutiri *brahmin* whereas a Nayak had no such permission.

By the first quarter of the ninth century the last of the Cheraman Perumal kings of Malabar, reigning at Kodungallur, embraced Islam. The story runs that after his conversion he left for Arabia. Landing at Shahr he sent Sharaf ibn Malik and others of his family with instructions regarding the Government of his territory and urged his people to show hospitality to Muslims. He never returned. To this day the Maharajas of Travancore on receiving the sword at their coronation declare : "I will keep his sword until

the uncle who has gone to Mecca returns."² The Muslims in Malabar were called *Mapillas*, which means *bridegroom*. The Moplas of today are probably the direct descendants of the Mapillas. Eleven mosques were built along the Malabar coast about this time. Arab merchants settled in Malabar without let or hindrance. They helped to enhance the Zamorin's power. They showed him new means of acquiring wealth. They supported him in his campaigns. They fought for him.

In Madura we find the earliest instance of a Hindu King endowing a mosque. In the village of Goripaleiyan there is a mosque for which Kun Pandya in the eleventh century donated six villages, that, like many a temple, this mosque should be maintained by the revenue and other income from the estate. In the time of Virappa Nayakam the grant was subjected to a close scrutiny but was confirmed in 1573 A. D.³ All

² Dr. Tarachand : *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p. 35.

³ Nelson : *Madura*, p. 69.

through we find an incredible religious tolerance and mutual appreciation of culture between the Vijayanagar rulers and their Muslim neighbours, and this, in spite of constant warfare among the two people. The Adilshahis and Nizamshahis of Ahmadnagar freely patronised Maratha chiefs and employed Hindu officers for their administration and Hindu troops in their army. The Hindu rulers of Vijayanagar reciprocated by employing Muslim troops, encouraging Muslim traders, and building mosques for their worship. Towards the end of that century, some Hindu hooligans of Cambay attacked a party of Muslim merchants and damaged a mosque. Siddh Raj (1094-1143 A.D.) held a public inquiry into the whole unfortunate affair, punished the culprits and donated sufficient money to build a new mosque.⁴ The natural result was that such occurrences were not repeated. One wonders if the vehement and voluble spokesmen of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League know these facts of Indian history. A thorough know-

⁴ Elliot : *History of India*, vol. 11, p. 164.

ledge of history is to be commended to all political speakers, including Presidents of communal organisations, Secretaries of State, Governors, Governors-General, and the like.

While it is true that the Hindu rulers of South India and the Buddhist ruler of Ceylon adopted an enlightened policy towards Muslim traders and immigrants, it is equally true that the Muslims by their healthy loyalty and goodwill soon came to be trusted and acquired a position of influence in social as well as political life. Their leaders became ministers, generals, admirals, ambassadors and petty lords in the service of Hindu kings. Marco Polo describes Taquiuddin as the Deputy Minister and Adviser of King Sunder Pandya. Fakharuddin was the Pandya ambassador to the Court of Kublai Khan who was made immortal by Coleridge. Raja Vir Ballala had a contingent of 20,000 Muslims. Many Hindu rulers employed Muslims in the army. The ruler of Somnath had a number of Muslim officers in his army. The Kasbatis of Ahmedabad trace their origin to the Khorasani Muslim soldiers in the

service of the Vaghela Chiefs.⁵ On the other hand, Mahmud of Ghazni had a strong contingent of Hindu troops who fought for him in Central Asia, and his trusted Hindu commander, Tilak, suppressed the rebellion of Niyaltigin, the Muslim general. One comes across many cases of Hindu-Buddhist conflict, but during this period there is hardly one record of Hindu-Muslim strife.

In the northern part of the country contacts between Muslims and Hindus began in a different way. In the eighth century, Muhamad bin Qasim invaded Sindh. At this time the Buddhist rulers of Sindh were fighting a losing battle against the *Brahmins*. The Muslim invasion seemed a God-send. The Buddhists went over to the Muslim side and helped considerably in the overthrow of Sindh. The conquering army advanced to the Indus valley and soon brought Multan as well as Sindh under the Caliphate. But the invaders got no further. For three hundred years they had to be content with that corner of the country. They

⁵ Forbes : *Rasa Mala*, vol. I, p. 276.

remained good neighbours for the most part. Most of the Hindu rulers of the vicinity showed the Muslims that generous hospitality which is proverbial of India. Sulaiman Masudi, Ibn Haukal and Abu Zaid join in their praise of Valabhi ruler of Gujerat, Balhara. Sulaiman says: "There does not exist among rulers a prince who likes the Arabs more than Balhara and his subjects follow his example . . . In his kingdom Islam is respected and protected, in all parts rise chapels and mosques where the Muslims say their five daily prayers."⁶ It is refreshing to discover that there was a time when Indians knew how to get on with those of other faiths; when Hindus could respect and protect Muslims; and Muslims could behave so as to deserve that respect and protection. In the eleventh century, Idrisi records: "The town of Anilwara is frequented by a large number of Muslim traders who go there on business. They are honourably received by the king and his ministers and find protection

⁶ Elliot : *History of India*, vol. I, p. 27.

and safety." Before the British came to India, apparently, the foreign bayonets were not needed to keep the two communities from mauling each other. They knew how to behave.

If Muslims found friendliness and protection in Hindustan, Hindus found an equally hearty reception in Caliphistan, the Land of the Caliphs. Under the early Umayyads many Hindus were given high posts in the financial department at Basra. The Caliph encouraged Hindus to establish a colony in Syria, especially at Antioch. Hajjaj built up a colony of Hindus at Kashgar. As Jean Perier says : "The black-eyed and olive-complexioned Hindus were brushing their shoulders against those of the Muslims in all the cities of the Caliphate."⁷ One should bear in mind that the eastern dominions of Caliphistan, that is, Khorasan, Afghanistan, Sistan and Baluchistan were Buddhist or Hindu long before they became Muslim. Indian influences were bound to percolate to the very centre of Muslim lands. Balkh

⁷ *Vie d'al Hadjdjadj ibn Yusuf*, pp. 249-52.

had a large and famous Buddhist monastery, *Nava Vihar* or *Nau Bahar*. The chief priest was known as the Barmak, obviously an Arabic version of *Paramukh* as the head of a Buddhist monastery was called.⁸ His descendants became the noted Barmakide Viziers of the Abbaside Caliphs. The influence of the Barmak family in the court of Harun-al-Rashid is acknowledged by many historians. Hindu pundits were invited to Baghdad to expound the learning of their land. *Brahmasidhanta* and Brahma-Gupta's treatises on astronomy were among the first Sanskrit books to be rendered into Arabic. Other books on astrology, medicine, and mathematics followed.

It was small wonder, therefore, that as early as the eleventh century Al-Beruni was tempted to visit Hindustan. His eager expectations were amply rewarded. His desire to drink deep of the fountain of Hindu wisdom was more than fulfilled. It is a delight to read Al-Beruni's *India*.

⁸Nicholson : *A Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 259.

One's faith in India's destiny is reinforced. One's confidence in the profound unity underlying the differences that characterise Indians today is enlarged. Al-Beruni describes the manners and customs and laws, the religion, philosophy and literature, the astronomy and astrology, the geography and history of the Hindustan of 1030 A.D. He made the first reliable translations from Sanskrit into Arabic of the *Sankhya* of Kapila and the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali. It was he who introduced the Muslim world to the *Bhagvadgita*. It is true that Buddhist works had been translated into Arabic two centuries earlier. Two of the best known ones being *Kitab-al-Bud* and *Bilawhar wa Budasif*. But the bulk of translations came later, the *Sindhind* or *Siddhanta*, the *Shushrud* or *Susruta*, the *Sirak* or *Charaka* the *Kalilah Damnah* or *Panchatantra* and *Bidpa* or *Hitopadesha*, and treatises on military science, logic and ethics.⁹ The overwhelming evidence of cultural interaction between Muslims and Hindus when both were

⁹ Vide Fluegel's *Fihrist*.

free people reduces the Two-Nation theory to a poor joke.

Men of learning, philosophers and poets, do not migrate to a country unless they are attracted by the atmosphere of that country. The Muslims of Arabia and Persia had come to know that Hindustan had a rich storehouse of learning and that the Hindus were hospitable to Muslims, otherwise outstanding scholars and thinkers and poets would not have ventured to leave their own land and migrate to India from the eleventh century onward. Al-Hujwiri, the author of *Kashful Mahjub*, an honoured resident of Ghazni came to Lahore and lived there until his death in 1063 A. D. Fariduddin Attar, the well-known mystic poet, author of *Mantiq-ut-Tair*, came to India in the twelfth century. Khawja Moinuddin Chishti, the reputed saint, came in 1197 A. D. and lived in Ajmere upto his dying day. In the thirteenth century, Jalaluddin Rumi, whom Sir Mohamad Iqbal called 'the Master of Rum', toured North India, and Jalaluddin Tabrizi visited Bengal. In 1244 A.D. Jalaluddin Bokhari

settled in Bahawalpur and Baba Farid at Pakpattan. A large number of Muslims, famous for their saintliness, scholarship, or literary talent, chose to leave their motherland and make India their home. In India they lived in peace and laboured happily to establish that tradition of Hindu-Muslim synthesis which found a magnificent expression in the life and reign of Akbar and will yet come to fruition in a National Government.

Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti of Ajmere contributed towards that synthesis in a unique way. He founded a sect of *Husaini Brahmins* who fast during the Hindu Shivratri and Muslim Ramzan and feast for the Muslim Id as well as the Hindu Ram-naomi. The men wear Muslim dress and the women put on the Hindu vermillion dot on the forehead. These Muslim-Hindus, or *Mian Thakurs* as they are called, would be equally bad misfits in a Muslim Pakistan as well as a Hindu India. And so also would the Khojas and the Chhajju-panthis and the Kakas of Gujerat. They symbolise the process of integration. They demand the right to

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live in an India which is free from all communal barricades.

Prince Dara, the great-grandson of Akbar, gave his life for the cause of national unity. For long years he studied Sanskrit and lived among Hindu *Sadhus* and *Sanyasins*. After scrupulous preparation he translated the Upanishads into Persian under the title of *Sirr-i-Akbar*, the Great Mystery. His preface to this translation opens daringly with the orthodox Hindu text *Om Shri Ganesh Namoh* ! He calls the Upanishads the earliest of the heavenly books and 'the spring of monotheistic streams'. He quotes the following verse from the Quran : "This is the honourable Quran, in the preserved book, let none touch it but the purified. It is a revelation from the lord of the worlds". And he maintains that this 'honourable Quran' applies to the Upanishads. Among his translations the *Yogavasistha*, the *Ramayana* and the *Bhagvadgita* are of special importance. But his greatest work is his *Majma-ul-Bahrayn*, the Meeting of Two Seas, in which he boldly defies all the bigotry of orthodox Mus-

lims by arguing that the difference between Hindu and Muslim mysticism is only verbal, essentially the two are the same. This tract was laid before the Muslim divines who denounced it as heretical and sentenced the princely author to death. Aurangzeb with his usual fanaticism ordered the sentence to be executed. Thus died Prince Dara, a martyr, to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Aurangzeb was a man of intrigues. Dara was a man of culture. Aurangzeb was a plotter in his youth and a fanatic in his middle age. Dara was a lover of wisdom. Aurangzeb raised fences, Dara sought union. Aurangzeb was the spiritual ancestor of Jinnah. Dara was the spiritual ancestor of Azad and the Frontier Gandhi. The spirit of Aurangzeb presided at the liquidation of the Mughal Empire. The spirit of Dara waits to preside at the foundation of India's national sovereignty.

There have been so many historical reasons for Hindus and Muslims to influence each other's thought and expression that one is not surprised to find the deep kinship that exists between

Sufism and Hindu mysticism. Dara's *Majma-ul-Bahrāyn* will be understood and appreciated better now than it was in his day. An English translation of it has been issued recently by the Bengal Asiatic Society. Without going into details let us consider some essential points of comparison. The Sufi *murid* needs a *pir* just as the Hindu *bhakta* needs a *guru* to be initiated into the mysteries of divine love. The Sufi concept of God is kindred to the Vedantic idea of *Brahman*. The Sufi idea of *Wahdat-ul-Wujud* is parallel to the *Advaita* and the Sufi doctrine of *Shuhūdiyya* to the *Vishistadvaita* of Hindu thought. The Sufi theory of *tanazzul* reminds one of the Hindu idea of *līla* through which the Infinite manifests itself in finite form. The *chakras* of Hindu Yoga find their counterpart in the *lataif* of Sufism. While the Sufi goal of *fana* is much the same as the *moksha* of the Hindu. Like *Bhakti* Sufism is a religion of intense self-negating devotion. For the Sufi as for the *bhakta*, poetry, song and even dance are the means of expression. Their

goal alike is union with the Adorable One. Sufism has coloured the religion of the average Muslim just as much as the *Bhakti* tradition has affected the religion of the average Hindu. For aught one knows Dara's 'meeting of two seas' is in the process of fulfilment.

Maulvi Abdul Wali Khan Saheb in an article entitled *Hinduism According To Muslim Sufis* gives some interesting material on the subject. The citations from Mirza Jan-i-Janan, a scholar of repute and a man of eminent spiritual attainments, are very striking. Writing to a disciple about Hinduism he says: "You should know that it appears from the ancient book of the Indians that the divine Mercy, in the beginning of the creation of the human species, sent a Book named *Bed* (Veda) which is in four parts in order to regulate the duties of this as well as the next world, containing the news of the past and the future, through an angel or divine spirit by the name of Brahma, who is omnipotent and outside the creation of the universe." In a later part of the same letter he says: "It ought to be

noted that according to the holy verse (of the Quran), 'And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them,' and again, 'And every nation had an apostle' there were prophets also in the countries of Hindustan (on whom be peace !) and their account is contained in the books of the Hindus. From their signs, it is apparent that they had attained high and perfect position. The Universal Divine Mercy did not leave out, for the good of His creatures, even this extensive country."¹⁰

A foreign missionary once said in a speech : "What impressed me most in India was the 'Hindu water' and the 'Muslim water' the 'Hindu tea' and the 'Muslim tea' at the railway stations." Whose fault was it that he was not impressed more deeply by the moonlit witchery of the Taj Mahal or the countless mausoleums of lesser fame built by cunning Hindu and Muslim craftsmen, in honour of Muslim men of learning or piety,

¹⁰ *Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, vol. XIX, 1923, No. 7, p. 243.

heroism or the spirit of sacrifice, and women of undying beauty of body and soul, who proudly lie at rest in Indian soil? In Lahore there is a shrine called the *Bibi Pakdaman*, the Chaste Ladies. The legend says that when Hussain was hard pressed by Yezid's army on the battlefield of Karbala in the month of Muharram 680 A. D. he asked six women of Ali's household to leave the camp and find safety in Hindustan. The six were Ruziyya or Bibi Haj, Ali's daughter, and Bibi Hur, Bibi Nur, Bibi Gawhar and Bibi Taj, daughters of Ali's brother Aquil. They started out. After a long journey, full of many hardships and adventures, they reached Lahore. The Hindu king on hearing of the strangers sent his son to bring them to the palace. They refused the invitation. But the prince pleaded incessantly whereupon Taj Bibi is said to have turned such a withering look at him that he fell in a swoon. On coming to he begged their pardon for his intrusion and asked them to teach him their religion. When they died he built six tombs for them and himself turned hermit and became the

mujawir or guardian. When he died a seventh tomb was raised in the *Pakdaman* graveyard for him. We may not believe the details of the legend. But it expresses a tradition. The legend would not have been born unless there were a strong tradition of Hindu hospitality. The *Bibi Pakdaman* has endured for a thousand years and more to tell the world that India can look after those of other faiths.

Surely, if Hussain could send six defenceless women to find safety in India and they found both shelter and converts, the President of the Muslim League need not be unduly exercised over the safety of the Muslim community today. India took care of *Bibi Pakdaman* for centuries before Ghaznavi built an enclosure round it and Akbar added a porch. India will assuredly look after her Muslim sons and daughters who treat her as their motherland. Indeed, it is a splendid tradition, this tradition of Al-Beruni and Attar, Kabir and Guru Nanak and Dara, Mohammad Ali and Chitaranjan Das, Ansari and Motilal Nehru. Not swayed till then

by the political passions of his class at strife with the Hindu middle class, Sir Mohammad Iqbal expressed this noble tradition in a noble song, *Our India*, in which he says :

“Better than all the world is this India of
ours,

It is our garden of flowers, its nightingales
are we ;

The highest mountain, companion of the sky

It is our sentinel and our guardian proud ;

In its lap a thousand rivers are sporting

Filling our world with rapture and teeming
life :

Religion does not teach the harbouring of
hate,

Indians are we, our homeland this India of
ours !”

And shall India forsake this sacred tradition ?
Shall India be misled by a handful of Hindu or
Muslim bigots or the mendacious eloquence of
Imperialists to turn her back on a tradition so
arduously and yet joyously made, a tradition of
abiding friendship and deep mutual appreciation,
a tradition for which Muslims and Hindus have

dreamed and laboured, sacrificed and died? The friendship is twelve hundred years old, the quarrels but fifty. The process of integration began in the eighth century, the disruptive tendency was started in the twentieth. Which shall prove the more powerful?

In which country of the world can there be the inter-religious and inter-racial goodwill that has been manifest in India in the most spectacular way? Can Britain ever have a Welsh Prime Minister? Can America ever have a Catholic President? Can France ever elect a Protestant to preside over the Republic? But India has elected Muslims and Hindus, Khojas and Bohras, Parsis and Christians even though they were British, to preside over the Indian National Congress. Cultural and racial synthesis is a historical fact. Pakistan is a passing shadow. National unity is India's destiny. Pakistan is a political stunt.

CHAPTER II

MILAPISTAN—THE LAND OF MEETING

The Greeks played a bad trick on us when they called India *The Land of the Indus* or *Indostan*, which soon took on its corrupted form of *Hindostan*. They should have called it *Milapistan* or the *Land of Meeting*, the *Rendezvous of Races*, the *Tryst of World-cultures*. For India is the land of meeting. Five tributaries come from various sources conspiring to meet the Indus and irrigate the Punjab. Mount Everest in snowy majesty raises its head to meet the winds of heaven and lose itself in the clouds. Bharat, the loyal brother, keeps Ramachandra's royal sandals on the throne of Ayodhya until the day of meeting when Rama returns crowned with triumph. Satyavan is dead and Savitri goes forth undaunted to win from Yama, the lord of the underworld, not only a chance of meeting

her husband but of being united with him for life. The doctrine of rebirth holds out endless possibilities of meeting. Indeed, it is a land of meeting without parting. Even when we ask our friends of the British Bureaucracy to quit India, they will not depart!

Like the Indus and its tributaries, a dozen races and half a dozen religions have come from north and west and east to join the main racial and cultural stream of India. Three thousand years ago the Aryans brought a Naturalism which found expression in the Vedic hymns, two thousand years ago the Greeks brought their Stoicism, seventeen hundred years ago the Syrians brought Christianity, twelve hundred years ago the Arabs brought Islam and a thousand years ago the Persians brought Zoroastrianism. And India was the meeting-place. But it was not only in the past that the Aryans came from the north and the Mongols from the east and the Greeks and Scythians, the Turks and Persians from the west to make India an international rendezvous. Today, Chinese and Burmese, Canadian and

Australian, British, American and Negro troops and evacuees and refugees from all parts of Europe and the East Indies congregate in our country, making it *Milapistan* in a deeper sense than ever before. And shall we be foolish and lament this proud privilege?

The meeting of races and cultures produces complex situations, it is true ; but it enriches the cultural life of the emergent race. It infuses new vitality. It offers the gift of variety. The genius of the Indian people is peculiarly fitted by Nature to gain from racial and cultural fusion. The capacity to adapt and assimilate is the Indian's forte. He has nothing to fear from foreigners or their traditions. Left to itself the Indian genius can suck the honey from any flower. Kabir and Guru Nanak, Prince Dara Shikoh and Keshab Chandra Sen have shown how this can be done even in religion where assimilation is most difficult.

The best of the Hindu and the finest in the Muslim religion were fused in the crucible of Guru Nanak's life. In Sikhism the Indo-

Muslim culture found a religious synthesis as in the Indo-Persian styles of painting and architecture the union had found æsthetic expression. The legend of Guru Nanak's death is very symbolic. The Guru drew a sheet over himself, uttered *Wah, Guru*, made obeisance to God and breathed his last. His Hindu and Muslim disciples disputed the disposal of the body, the Hindus wanting cremation and the Muslims burial. When they lifted the sheet, however, the body was not there. They found in stead two bunches of flowers. On the banks of the Ravi river the Hindus erected a shrine and the Muslims a tomb over their flower-tokens. Nature was furious that such an ugly spirit of disunion should insult the Guru's God of love and his Land of Union. "Why two....why not one?" said the Ravi in angry floods and washed away both the shrine and the tomb.

The cultural interaction between Hindus and Muslims, which in the life and teachings of Guru Nanak found a beautiful religious expression, influenced Indian languages, arts and crafts,

mode of living, manners and customs no less profoundly than habits of thought. Marathi and Gujarati, Sindhi and Punjabi, and most of all Hindi came under the vitalising touch of Persian. Linguistic influences cannot be understood mechanically as word-borrowing. They must be understood in all their ideational implications. Persian words and idioms introduced Persian thought-moulds, attitudes and cultural values into the speech, thought and life of the people of Maharashtra and Gujarat, Sindh and the Punjab, the United Provinces and Bengal, South India and Central India.

Language is an important factor in any process of racial or communal integration since it influences modes of thought no less than modes of speech, and, through its emotive power, modes of action also. Indo-Persian literature, to which Kashmiri Pundits contributed freely and to some extent the Kayasthas of the United Provinces also naturally contains a large number of words of Indian origin. On the other hand, thousands of words of Persian origin have become part and parcel of

every Indian vernacular. This assimilation of Arabic, Persian and Turkish words and ideas with the concepts and ideograms of Sanskrit origin is interesting not only to students of philosophy but also to those who trace social processes. This linguistic co-ordination produced Urdu, the pretty language of reconciliation, the symbol of the interpenetration of Hindu and Muslim culture, the language, ironically enough, which the Muslim League uses to propagate its Two-Nations theory.

Urdu literature is not the monopoly of Persian-knowing Muslims. Pundit Daya Shanker Kaul, "Naseem," wrote the celebrated *masnavi*, *Gulzar-i-Naseem*, of which many verses have become familiar quotations. Anis and Dabir have Munshi Jwala Prasad, "Barq," and Pundit Brij Narayan, "Chakbast," as their Hindu successors in carrying on the traditions of the *marsiya*. Munshi Durga Sahai, "Sarur," ranks high as a vigorous exponent of the modern school of Urdu poetry as well as for his own unrivalled contributions. His patriotic poems, *Khak-i-Watan* and *Madar-i-Hind*, and his historical and

even religious poems appeal to Hindus and Muslims alike. Through him many Hindi words found a permanent abode in Urdu literature. Pundit Ratan Nath, "Sarshar," author of *Fisan-i-Azad*, the first realistic novel, holds a unique place among writers of Urdu prose. All historians of Urdu literature acknowledge their debt to Lala Sri Ram for his *Kum Khan-i-Jweed*, a monumental history of Urdu poets with selections from their writings. Maharaja Sir Kishen Prasad, "Shad," of Hyderabad has the distinction of being a Hindu Sufi. His diwan entitled *Khumkadai Rahmat*, in praise of the Prophet, enshrined within Urdu literature a transcendent inter-communalism at once sincere and beautiful.

If the strands of Muslim and Hindu thought were woven together into growing designs of Urdu literature, the strands of Hindu and Muslim culture gave new colour and freshness to patterns of Hindi poetry. Amir Khusro is considered the first poet of popular Hindi. Kutban, Manjhan, Usman, Sheikh Nabi, Kasim Shah and Nur Mohammad, poets of considerable merit,

enriched the tradition of Hindi *Bhakti* poetry with their *Sufi* contribution. Kabir ranks high among Hindi poets and has the added honour of leading the monotheistic *Bhakti* movement initiated by Ramananda which attracted both Hindus and Muslims. In fact, his followers, chiefly from the lower strata of Hindu and Muslim society, formed the "Kabir-panth" which still flourishes in the United and Central Provinces. Rahim Khan Khana won the admiration of all Hindus for his undaunted praise of Maharana Pratap Singh, the avowed enemy of his master, Akbar. He has been called "Pratap's panegyrist, Akbar's Poet-Premier." The luscious devotional poetry of Raskhan endeared him to all Vaishnavas and he was accorded an honoured place among Vaishnava poets. Malik Muhammad Jayasi wrote one of the finest allegorical narrative poems, *Padmavati*. Nor has the tradition been sabotaged even today by bigoted communalists. Josh Malihabadi pours forth his inspiring passion and pain in Urdu while Zahur Bux adds every year to the critical literature of Hindi.

Hindi and Urdu are the only two inter-provincial languages. No student of Hindi, whatever his caste or creed, can forget the Muslims who have added to its treasures ; can fail to come under the influence of their utterances ; and, in spite of the unseemly noise of communal bickerings, cease to quote them in homely conversation or public lectures. So also, a student of Urdu cannot escape the effect of contributions made by Hindu poets and prose-writers nor evade the stern reality of linguistic co-ordination and literary collaboration between Hindu and Muslim elements. Muslims will quote "Chakbast" or "Naseem" with as much pride as they would a Muslim poet. Let it not be forgotten that literature has unique power to further a process of racial or communal integration as it affects the very springs of thought and speech, emotion and conduct. Race and caste and creed have no place in the realm of literature. For this reason, one feels Iqbal slipped when he allowed the political passions of his day to turn him from Urdu to Persian for his later works.

It was not only a matter of state-craft but a genuine interest in the literary expression of the people that animated Muslim rulers to become patrons of vernacular literature. Akbar, of course, is the dazzling example, but there were others, though less known. Vidyapati, the Maithili poet, praised Nasir Shah, king of Gauda and Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din for generous and sustained encouragement of vernacular literature. Indeed, Nasir Shah had the first Bengali translation of the *Mahabharata* started in his court. It is unfortunate that Hindu rulers did not return the compliment and patronise Persian or Urdu letters as much as they might have.

Shahbuddin, Nizam Shah, Sher Shah, Shah Jehan, Muzaaffar Shah, Malla Shah were among those Muslim rulers who patronised Sanskrit literature with a generosity that has won extravagant eulogies from Hindus. Nine verses written by Bhanukara in praise of Nizam Shah and one in praise of Sher Shah are preserved in Sanskrit Anthologies. Akbariya-Kalidas bestows lavish praise on the great Emperor whose catholicity of

taste and regal generosity inspired a cultural renaissance in India. If, indeed, there had been more of his kind among the rulers of India, Indian art and Indian life would not have undergone corruption and decay. Jagannath says in his *Asaf-Vilas*, a Sanskrit work devoted to the praise of Nur Jehan's brother, Asaf Khan, that he was given the title of *Panditaraja* by Shah Jehan himself. Jagannath married a Muslim girl, Lavangi, whom he describes rapturously in many stanzas. He spent most of his life at the court of Shah Jehan and left Delhi only after the brutal murder of Dara Shikoh. In one of his verses Jagannath says : "Only the Lord of Delhi and the Lord of the Universe should be invoked for help." Such sentiments reveal the affection and esteem in which Sanskrit writers held the Muslim rulers. It is believed that Harinarayan Misra, Pundarika Vitthal, Amritadatta and others also received royal patronage from Muslims. Dr. Jatindra Bimal Chaudhari says : "It may be added in conclusion that not only many scholars secured ungrudged patronage from several Muslim rulers but some

of the rulers themselves, such as Shaista Khan, and also not a few of their co-religionists contributed, during their reigns, to Indian literature in general and Sanskrit and Bengali in particular."¹

From the plates in Martin's *Miniature Painting of Persia, India and Turkey*, one can imagine the influence of Chengiz Khan and Timur on Persian art. The battle-ground and the hunting-ground are popular as they should have been. But so is romance. The perennial themes of Laila and Majnu and Shirin and Farhad, youths and maidens dallying in the garden beside a silver stream, gorgeous receptions in princely courts, banquets with sumptuous food and wine are all represented. And in each scene an intense individualism makes the artists neglect perspective and composition for the joy of depicting every detail. The meeting of this art-consciousness with the Hindu produced a new style which was neither that of Ajanta nor that of Samarquand and Herat but something different

¹ *Modern Review*, August 1942.

and better for the difference. Upon the dreamy plasticity of Ajanta were impressed the laws of symmetry, proportion and spacing from Samarghand and Herat. New splendours were added to the pomp of Persia. In place of the free and easy simplicity of Indian art there came a sense of courtly correctness. The exuberance of nature was replaced by magnified details. Some of the dynamic energy of both Hindu and Muslim art was consequently sacrificed. But, in stead, a subtlety of line and richness of tone were acquired.²

Hindu painters were quick to assimilate the Persian influence while Muslim painters eagerly absorbed the ideals of Hindu art. In the celebrated *Aini-i-Akbari* we find the names of a large number of Hindu artists who were famous enough to be summoned to Akbar's court. Daswant, Basawan, Mukund, Jagan Nath, Kesho Lal, Haribans, Madho were perhaps among the best. The exchange of Hindu and Muslim art-ideals must have found a vital blend in the works of these

² Tarachand : *Ibid*, p. 269.

Hindu painters or they could not have satisfied the fastidious and unimpeachable taste of that royal art-lover. Among the illustrators of the manuscript found in the Khuda Bux Library at Bankipur, Hindu artists from Gwalior, Gujerat and Kashmere are mentioned. It is very significant that these men, Tulsi, Surjan, Ishar, Suraj, Shanker and Banwali acquired proficiency enough as 'illustrators' since this art of 'illustration' was a peculiarly Persian art, and, hence, altogether new to the Hindu painters. In the reign of Shah Jehan the Muslim artists, Nadir Samarquandi, Mir Hashim, Faquir Allah Khan, were equalled if not surpassed by their Hindu contemporaries, Kalyan Das, Manohar, Rai Anup and others.³

In painting and music, even more than in poetry, we find it was not without historical purpose that the Hindu and Muslim civilisations were brought together. For each needed from

³ Smith: *A History of Fine Arts of India and Ceylon*, p. 482.

the other just that æsthetic impulse which alone could turn craftsmen into artists. Mughal influence drew Hindu art from the 'dim religious light' of the temple to feel the stimulus of the grandeur of the Moghal Court where debonaire nobles and glittering ladies admired and delighted in that romance of life which makes lovers reckless heroes and gives to women in love a keen loveliness. From the Rajput school of painting to those of the present day one can trace the liberating, vitalising Moghal influence ; while Muslim painting was rescued from its merely decorative luxuriance by the sensuous symbolism of Hindu art and inspired to capture human patterns of beauty from actual life. From the Mughal school to Muslim painters like Chughtai one can see a symbolical realism, which is the effect of Hindu influence. The works of Hindu and Muslim artists have in turn, transmitted to generations of Indians, of the aristocracy as well as the middle class, a zest for Indo-Muslim art and a spontaneous acceptance of the cultural blending which makes that art possible with all

its dreamy sensuousness, its emotional intensity, its suggestive charm.

Margaret Cousins has said with deep feeling. "The gold of Golconda, the jewels of Maharajas, the muslins of Dacca, the brass of Benares, the shawls of Kashmere, the silks of Surat, the cave paintings of Ajanta, the sculpture of Elephanta, the glory of the Taj Mahal, the feats of fakirs, the sacred lore of Sanskrit, the fecundities of its philosophies, have all been bruited abroad in the earth, but its gift of song remains unoffered, unknown and unsung outside India's confines. Yet none of its arts is more perfect, more loved, more widespread, more interwoven with its life than is its music." Today it is so for Hindus and Muslims alike. For five centuries both have offered together their truest devotion and best gifts to enrich the musical heritage of their loved motherland and ours.

The Muslims who first came to India to stay brought an intense love for music which had been repressed by Islamic taboos. Their new environment was so filled with the passionate

pulsations of the flute and the drum, the animating clang of cymbals and the seductive notes of the vina, and above all the full-throated songs of men and women that they allowed their hunger for music to have the right of way. The mystical outpourings of the Sufis were soon put to "Qawwali" tunes but "Ghazals" too began to be heard. The Mughal rulers revelled in Indian music and set the example for the nobility. Before long Indian musical performances were held for all festive occasions by Muslims as by Hindus. Some Indian instruments, slightly modified, were christened with Persian names, "Dilruba," "Sarod," "Taus," "Rabab." The impetus given to Indian music by the patronage of Muslim rulers and the nobility brought about the revival of an art which was languishing chiefly because musicians were neglected and hence bankrupt financially and in creative inspiration and also because it needed to be liberated from the shackles of religious formalism. Within two generations or so Muslim musicians had begun to master Indian music and gradually became exceedingly popular among

Hindus, especially for the rendering of "Holi," "Pads" and "Bhajans"—however hard the Mahasabha find this to swallow. Likewise, Hindu "Qawwals" have not been unknown.

It should not be forgotten that Prof. Bhatkhande, who is honoured as the great revivalist of Indian music in our age, got his training in all varieties of Hindustani music from Wazir Khan of Rampur and Mohammad Ali, the famous *kheyal*-expert of Jaipur, as also from Belvelkar, the noted *dhrupad*-expert. And this Poona *brahmin* was proud of the debt he owed to his Muslim *ustads* (teachers). Out of the four important styles of *kheyal* that exist in the country today, three are represented by Muslim masters, Abdul Karim of Bombay, Fyaz Khan of Agra and Ghulam Ali of the Punjab, the fourth being represented by two Hindus, Raja Bhaya and Shanker Pundit of Gwalior.

The inter-communalism of Indian music has continued to bind Indians together with the encircling chains of melody which the periodic effervescence of political rivalries cannot break.

The impression that music makes on the hearts and minds of the mixed crowds that listen entranced to mixed performers rapturously singing mixed songs is deeper and more lasting than the effect of spurious propaganda. Hindustani music, which is being popularised in every part of India by our enterprising Film Directors, is the melodic creation of Hindu and Muslim talent expressing the elemental longings and sweetest joys, the eternal passion and pain of the human heart which is neither Hindu nor Muslim, black nor white, brown nor yellow. Who has the power to break the decommunalising spell of Indian music?

In architecture a similar synthesis emerged as in painting. Havell says with creditable insight: "In all the Indian styles at Delhi, Ajmere, Agra, Gaur, Malwa Gujerat, Jaunpur and Bijapur, whether the local rulers were Arab, Pathan, Turk, Persian, Mongol or Indian, the form and construction of the domes of mosques and tombs and palaces, as well as the Hindu symbols that crown them; the *mihrahs* made to simulate Hindu shrines; the arches Hinduised often in construc-

tion, in form nearly always; the symbolism which underlies the decorative and structural designs all these tell us plainly that to the Indian builders the sect of the Prophet of Mecca was only one of the many which made up the synthesis of Hinduism: they could be good Muhammadans but remain Hindu.⁴ We must remember that Muslim architecture was characterised by a severe simplicity resulting from the rigorous geographical conditions of Muslim lands and the sternly one-pointed devotion enjoined by Islam. While Hindu architecture was characterised by external luxuriance and internal mystery, the natural outcome of the exuberance of nature in India and the mystical quality of Hinduism. The synthesis was symbolical of the interaction of Hindu-Muslim culture. The clever craftsmanship, the complex design and the ornamental richness remained largely Hindu. The arcuated form, flashing domes, smooth walls and spacious interiors were Muslim contributions.

⁴ *Indian Architecture*, p. 101.

The earliest known example of Hindu-Muslim architecture is the temple built in 1439 A. D. by Dharanaka, a Jain. It is situated at Ranpur, near Sodari, in the Godwar district of Jodhpur. It is remarkable for the departure from orthodox Hindu traditions. Other examples of the next century or two are the Govind Deva temple built by Raja Man Singh at Brindaban and the Jain temples of Sonagarh, Tirumalai Nayak's palace at Madura, the palaces at Ambar, Udaipur, Bundi and Datia, and the mausoleum of Bir Singh Dev of Orchha. The Jain temple at Delhi, the Golden Temple of the Sikhs at Amritsar, the Viseshvara temple at Benares, the Pagoda at Calcutta, the mausoleums of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Maharana Sangram Singh of Udaipur, of Chhatrasal and his queen Kamalavati all exhibit with pride the elements of Hindu-Muslim architecture. This Indian style of architecture (for it is as truly Indian as the Hindus and Muslims are today) is not restricted to palaces and temples, mosques and mausoleums. It can be seen everywhere, in bathing places, landings,

schools and colleges, and even private residences.

Not at musical 'sittings' only but far more in the social intercourse of rural life (my experience excludes S. India) there is a relationship between Muslims and Hindus and such Christians as are not spoilt by mongrel modes which is more intimate than '*comraderie*' and borders on brotherhood. At the three important ceremonies of life, birth, marriage and death, they participate as more than friends. Except eating together (and that cannot happen so long as the caste system imposes its irrationalities) they are as one community, sometimes as one family. Often scarcely any difference is to be seen in the dress of Muslims and Hindus save a few stray fez caps.

After a careful survey of the cultural interaction between Hindus and Muslims in literature, religion and philosophy, astronomy and medicine, arts and crafts, economic and social life, Dr. Tarachand concludes: "It is hardly possible to exaggerate the extent of Muslim influence over Indian life in all departments.

But nowhere else is it shown so vividly and so picturesquely as in customs, in intimate details of domestic life, in music, in the fashions of dress, in the ways of cooking, in the ceremonial of marriage, in the celebrations of festivals and fairs, and in the courtly institutions and etiquette of Maratha, Rajput and Sikh princes. In the days of Babar the Hindu and Muslim lived and thought so much alike that he was forced to notice their peculiar *Hindustani way*. His successors so gloriously adorned and so marvelously enriched this legacy that India might well be proud today of the heritage which they in their turn have left behind".⁵ In the passage of the centuries that process of integration has only gone deeper. Today, the *Hindustani way* of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians is far more remarkable.

It is not uncommon to find a patriarchal Muslim being the 'uncle' of an entire village, for young and old, rich and poor; and in some other

⁵ *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture*, p. 142.

village a silver-haired Hindu occupying the same position (or shall we say 'office?'). It is an official position, as a young urchin might pluck at 'uncle's' dhoti or coat and ask for sweets ; an embarrassed widow might come to him to be saved from a callous creditor ; or he might be summoned to settle a quarrel between village factions. His word carries more weight than that of a Chief Justice. Anybody not abiding by 'uncle's' decision finds the village a very uncomfortable domicile.

To see a Hindu 'uncle' coming to the rescue of a Muslim whose cattle are being driven away by an irate Hindu to be impounded ; to hear 'uncle' call : "*Are Sarju ! be a decent fellow, my son, and leave those animals. Peru is a poor man. He will be careful in future*"; and to witness the change in the irate Hindu, the immediate release of the cattle, and the reconciliation of the Muslim and Hindu, is to feel a tingling pride at being an Indian. Yes, although to be an Indian is to suffer all kinds of indignities that an insane albinocracy can heap on

human beings, to be treated as cattle during British evacuation, to be considered fit for nothing but tyranny. For in no other part of the civilised world can such a moral dictatorship be possible, when respect for a good man, for his ancient wisdom, his ample goodwill cancels age-old feuds and gives to his simple requests the authority of kingly commands. This is India, backward in some things, unhappy in many ways, unfortunate and unfriended but still inspired by a civility which often seems benighted to the enlightened barbarism of her critics. This is India for which thousands of Muslims from the villages, of whom Quaid-e-Azam, Churchill and Mahatma Roosevelt know nothing, would be willing to fight to the death beside their Hindu comrades to save it from dismemberment.

When one remembers that the interaction between Hindus and Muslims is not of a day but of fifty or more generations, one is hardly surprised to find Muslims partly Hinduised and Hindus partly Muslimised. It is not surprising to see Muslims wear talismans and *tabijes*, be-

lieve in *jhar-phunk* (magic ?) and in rare cases even worship the goddess that protects against small-pox. It only means that the vast masses of Muslims are by now so completely Indianised, so thoroughly merged through inter-marriage with Hindu women that they have no racial distinctions and no awareness of religious conflict. On the other hand, one is not astonished to find Hindus believe in Muslim *Pirs* and offer *Chaddars* and flowers at their graves, go to Muslim *faqirs* for charms, and in rare cases when their male-children do not survive to have the next son circumcised by a Muslim *faqir*. The history of the Shaikhavati clan is interesting from this point of view. Mokal Rana was long childless. At last, as a result of the benediction of a Muslim *faqir*, Shaikh Burhan, a son was born to the Rana. He called the child Shaikhji. And Shaikhji became the patriarch of the Shaikhavati clan. Growse tells us : "At the birth of every male infant a goat is sacrificed and while the *Kalima* (Islamic religious text) is being recited the child is sprinkled with blood. He is invested

with the *Baddhiya*, or cross-strings, usually worn by little Muhammadans ; and when he lays them aside he is bound to suspend them at the saint's *Dargah* (tomb) still existing six miles from Achrol. For two years he wears a blue tunic and cap (like a Muslim child) and for life abstains from hog's flesh (to respect Muslim sentiments) and all meat in which blood remains."⁶

Hundreds of Hindus join with enthusiasm in the annual *Urs*-celebration in Bahraich, in the United Provinces, in honour of Ghazi Mian, a Muslim saint, revered all over India. In Eastern Bengal, where the fair is not held, a mud platform is dedicated to him and it is venerated by Hindus and Muslims alike.⁷

It only shows that the vast masses of Hindus are by now so intimately associated with their Muslim companions that in an untutored state they are not conscious of any difference.

On the contrary, it is amazing that in towns

⁶ *Mathura*, p. 131

⁷ Subhan : *Sufism*, pp. 123-25.

a conch-shell sounding in front of a mosque should become sufficient cause for a riot when the louder toot of motor horns is not considered objectionable. It is astonishing that the *Vande Mataram* should rouse the righteous indignation of the League when the *taziya*, clearly a clever Muslim adaptation of the *Durga-puja*, is rationalised and upheld. It is astounding that the Hindu Mahasabha should claim India as the patrimony of Hindus when Hindus and Muslims have lived together in India for five centuries, together enriched her treasures of poetry, art and music and studded the land with noble buildings, laboured together in field and factory and with the craftsman's tools, suffered together the hunger and misery, the shame and sorrow inflicted on India by British Imperialism, dreamed great dreams together of a glorious India yet to be, and striven together in the stretching rural outreaches to make life mutually happy, prosperous and peaceful. It is incredible that political animosities kept alive by artificial respiration should be able to make some men forget their moral obli-

gations, their mutual gratitude, their human bonds. One cannot believe that two puny organisations, the Mahasabha and the League, can undo the inter-communal integration and the racial fusion of the past.

It would be easier, indeed, for Scotland, Wales and the Isle of Man to make out a case for complete separation on the basis of a Four-Nations theory than for any community in India to establish a Two-Nations theory. The Scot, Welsh and Manx peoples are more distinct from the English in historical traditions, culture, language, outlook on life or fundamental morality and religious prejudices than the Hindus and Muslims can be even after two generations of mordant propaganda. Would those Englishmen who show 'impartial' sympathy with the Pakistan demands be willing to show as much sympathy with similar demands of the Scot, Welsh and Manx races for separate governments? How gallant it would be for the League to send a few able propagandists to Scotland, Wales and the Isle of Man to impart political education and

awaken them to their racial and cultural differences and their rightful claim to home rule ! Perhaps, America or Germany or Japan, only to discharge a moral duty and keep the peace, would walk in and take charge of the Government of the British Isles until the Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Manx and English peoples could agree and come to a settlement among themselves.

Indeed, Chowdhary Khalik-uz-zaman, the rising star of the League, had better make haste to abandon the *Chowdhary* from his name. Being a Hindu title of Sanskrit origin, it stands as a constant refutation of his Two-Nations theory. But, then, the ambitious Chowdhary will have to attempt some expert jugglery and bring forth evidence like rabbits out of a hat in order to substantiate the vagary of Pakistan. The League would do well to ask Chowdhary Amery to set a few able historians to rewrite the history of the last five hundred years. Or will some Canute of the Mahasabha or League or even of the Congress dare to command the tidal flow of Indian history to stop in its destined course ? Against the back-

ground of history a Hindu India seems as threadbare a myth as Pakistan, for the historical process of integration which started when the first Aryans set foot on Indian soil, and has never been arrested since, must inevitably bring about greater unity rather than disruption. Any force that proves to be disrupting will sooner or later negate itself. India is destined to be *Madar-i-Hind*, the proud and happy Motherland of all her children, holding them equally dear and giving them equal protection, equal opportunities, equal freedom, equal rights and equal obligations. To work for anything less is high treason against the Nation.

CHAPTER III

PAKISTAN—LAND OF THE HOLY

Satan was expelled from Heaven for his Two-Nations Theory. The Almighty thought that the danger was stamped out. But Satan roamed the earth preaching his theory. He found countless supporters. A few opposed it but they were soon crushed by the combined might of the religocracy, aristocracy, moneyocracy and millocracy of the earth. Bishops, Maulvis, Pundits worked the theory out. Politicians put it into effect. They carved three provinces out of Heaven. Satan was put in charge of these. Heaven was given to Plutocrats. So came Hell into existence. The Almighty sighed : "Alas, nothing can now prevent the periodic ravages of war". Then later Satan sent his personal Envoy to India.

Any theory of 'Balkanisation' runs counter to the process of history. The historical process is one of integration towards larger unity. The trend of human development has been from the

family to the clan, from that to the tribe, from the tribal to the racial, and from that to the national. Obviously, it cannot stop at that. Mankind must grow towards international integration. Nor will that be after the crazy pattern of Amery's or Duff Cooper's or Hitler's or Togo's or Roosevelt's delirium of world-hegemony. Rather, it will be an international integration in which national sovereignty is voluntarily renounced by each for greater and more equitable friendship among the nations. At this stage of history to advance a Two-Nations theory in India is as reasonable as to go to war with camel-corps and cavalry in an age of mechanised warfare.

Many good-hearted men and women have made attempts to unite the various communities in India. Most of these attempts have ended in establishing Mutual Garlanding Societies. Now, these societies are in themselves very pleasant, but the real issues are often concealed by the garlands. Is it possible to have unity without national integration? To attempt to bring

about national unity without inter-communal integration is like trying to produce light by keeping the positive and negative wires from meeting. Unless the various communities are nationally integrated there can be no feeling of common nationality. *The integrity of nationhood depends on the integration of its component parts, racial and communal.*

It is not a vain desire for impressive hair-splitting that makes one draw a distinction between *integration* and *unity*. There is an important and a real difference. This difference affects our attitude to the problem and our method to solve it. *Integration* is an organic concept ; *unity* a political one. *Integration* takes into account psychological and sociological factors. *Unity* is based on legalistic terms and conditions. *Integration* implies a vital process of adjustment and 'fitting into.' *Unity* implies an alliance for specific purposes. *Integration* leads to a larger community of life, interests, traditions and loyalties. *Unity* without integration ends with the fulfilment of a contract. Britain could cheerfully

unite with Russia for the specific purpose of this war. But Churchill would probably have an attack of apoplexy at the thought of Anglo-Soviet integration. In India inter-communal integration will imply adjustments for the major as well as the minor communities. The more fundamental these adjustments are the deeper the integration. Such a process of integration will render it feasible to work towards a higher synthesis of common nationality. Whereas, any unity achieved by diplomatic skill will be as short-lived as the Hindu-Muslim alliance of Khilafat days.

Racial synthesis is much more difficult to achieve than communal integration because racial differences are more deep-rooted and cover a wider horizon. Yet history is full of interesting examples of such synthesis. Consider Britain. No people are more solidly united today than the British. Yet they do not spring from one racial stock. Half a dozen races at least came together on the soil of Britain. There was sharp conflict. There were cruel battles. But the

historical process was not arrested. In India the Indo-Aryan, the Dravidian, the Mongolian, the Aryo-Dravidian, the Dravido-Mongolian, the Scytho-Dravidian and the Turco-Iranian, not to mention others, have met and mingled and become Indianised. The result has not been as disastrous as Empire-builders and their hired engineers would have the world believe. In spite of the charge of intolerance and closed-mindedness levelled at Indian leaders by professional dupes, the racial synthesis has given Indians a tolerance that says 'live and let live'; an open-mindedness that keeps Indians responsive to ideas and influences regardless of petty boundaries of creed or nation; and a patient confidence in the ultimate self-negation of evil which makes Indians exasperating enigmas to impatient Westerners. No realist expects unmixed blessings out of the conflict of antithetical forces which shape the trend of civilisation and human development. The racial interaction in India has been responsible on the Hindu side for the rigid tribalism of caste, and, on the Muslim for an

inferiority-complex which has regrettable manifestation. And on both sides it has produced the purdah-mentality which amounts to a sort of declaration of standing hostilities. These three factors put together have proved powerful enough to delay a social revolution in India which must take place in order to clear the atmosphere for the final stages of integration. Integration must logically bring about social revolution and only through such social revolutions can a living unity be achieved and sustained.

But there is no cause for despair. The process of inter-communal integration has been going on for twelve centuries. Witness Sikhism and the Brahmosamaj and the Bhakti Movement of the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries, not to mention the effects on Indian music, art, architecture and poetry. In fact, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League would not have had to froth at the mouth in their frenzied attempts to whip up anti-communal feeling had the process of integration not gone far. Akbar's having taken unto himself a Hindu consort was

not only an acknowledgment of the fact of *Akhand Hindustan* but a bold act of breaking down all theories of separateness. The Goliath of *Pakistan* must sooner or later fall dead, struck by a pebble from the sling of History.

Nevertheless, the process of integration has not been and cannot be plain sailing. The clash of opposites causes disharmony until contradictions are resolved in some vital synthesis. This clash in India has been labelled "the Communal Problem." The nefarious Communal Award was the attempt of British political doctors to preserve the problem like an Egyptian mummy. A conflict of social forces cannot be understood by reducing everything to the least common denominator. The communal problem is complex and must be understood in its complexity if there is to be conscious co-operation to arrive at a solution. Mahatma Gandhi's pronouncement with regard to the attitude of the Muslim League is an interesting example of over-simplification which reduces the real issue and the understanding of it to zero.

He says : "Either the League believes that India is as much the home of Muslims as of non-Muslims, or it does not. If it does, it must first free the home from bondage before partitioning it. Today there is nothing to partition. After ridding the home of the foreign occupant, it can demand partition if it wishes and get it by negotiation or force. However, if it does not believe in India being the home of Muslims, there is no question of negotiations for freeing India from bondage." To keep the metaphor of 'the home' let us put it this way : The Muslims do believe that India is their home as much as that of any Indian group. They want to do their share to free that home. But according to statements made by Hindu leaders like Dr. Moonje and others of his outlook all non-Hindus are India's step-children. How are the step-children to unite with the heirs to free the home ? .It is not what one community believes that determines its relations with the other communities. That complex of relationships is determined by the complex of 'beliefs', ambitions, fears and interests of the majority and minority groups.

The communal problem is actually a religio-political and a socio-economic struggle which when solved will enable India to be a model of unification and consolidation for the rest of the world. On the side of the Hindus, the caste system, which has developed into a religio-political as well as a socio-economic institution, fosters an exclusiveness nothing short of tribal. As it happens, every one of the minority communities is casteless and negates the caste-basis. Naturally, it constitutes a threat to the Hindu social structure. In Sikhism and the Brahmosamaj caste is abolished. The social reform attempted under the aegis of the Bhakti Movement centuries ago attacked caste. With the dissolution of caste a good deal of the exploitation of the masses will not be possible and those who gain enormous profits from this exploitation will suffer. At the same time the hold and prestige of priest-craft will diminish. This threat is accentuated by the proselytising campaigns of at least two of the minorities, the Christian and the Muslim. The Aryasamaj, which labours indefatigably to off-set

the conversion-menace to Hindu numbers, is no consolation to the Hindu community as the Aryasamaj itself repudiates caste.

On the side of the Muslims the fear of losing what little economic security they have, of being divested of their social and political individuality, and of impairing their religious integrity produces an inferiority-complex which manifests itself in "Days of Deliverance" and riots and finally the fond hope of an Indian Pakistan linked with a Pan-Islamic Asiatic Federation. They know that the genius of Hinduism is the opposite of that of Islam. If Islam conquers by the sword, Hinduism conquers its conquerors by sheer absorption. The magnificent synthesis of this clash of opposites is in the process of being achieved under the inspiration of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan among the Muslims of the Frontier. Such interaction is not only inevitable but refutes all claims that Muslims and Hindus in India constitute two distinct nations.

On both sides the purdah system is the social symbol of conflict. The numerical strength of a

community depends on its woman-power. The loss of one woman to either community constitutes the virtual loss of approximately four members in the next generation. So women must be kept safe behind purdah. Beyond all that nature intended her to be as a harbinger of beauty and joy and an inspiration for heroism, woman for the Hindu and Muslim communities assumes a religio-political as well as a socio-economic significance. So she must be shut up in ignorance lest she should expose herself to the Philistines.

The other minority communities contribute chiefly to communal statistics and nothing more. The Indian Christians are busy keeping on the right side of their employers, Missionary or Official, and, generally speaking, can be induced to assemble only for tea-parties or revival meetings. The Sikhs and Parsis, unless antagonised by some specific assault on their interests, are quite happy to be left to their epicurean ways. Of course, the Harijans are in open revolt against the oppression of caste, but have not enlisted as

combatants in the communal struggle—perhaps because Mahatmaji has adopted a Harijan girl and has coined a pretty name for the ‘Untouchables’. Anyway, the religiocracy, aristocracy, moneyocracy and millocracy on the Hindu and Muslim sides, joined now and then by sympathisers from other minorities, continue to harness incredible funds and some Coriolanuses to keep the disruptive forces at work so as to safeguard their vested interests. They raise the notorious cry “Religion in danger!” to rally their men for holy fratricide.

It is agreed on all hands that national integration is wrought by common traditions of work, social life, and cultural activity. Hindus and Muslims have common traditions of work. Either as peasants or factory hands they toil much in the same way to earn a living. As members of the *salariat* the work does not differ but a strong element of rivalry comes in which has not proved healthy. In manners and customs there has been a good deal of interaction and although there are differences there is considerable kinship.

In cultural activity Hindus and Muslims have toiled together to create and perpetuate common traditions. In religion there is on the surface an unbridgeable gulf between the two communities but in actual life there has been marked interchange for twelve centuries, so that not only in the Sufi and Bhakti schools does one find common features but also in the religious life, ideas, customs and prejudices of the average Muslim and Hindu, especially in the rural areas, one finds more resemblances than differences. The conflict arises because socially the two communities have not been able to take the hurdle of the caste system and politically they have been torn asunder by the rivalries that result from the economic interests of the English-educated middle class.

Upto 1856 there is no evidence of communal rancour on the part of the Muslims.¹ In 1853 when stipends to Muslim students in the Cal-

¹ For a scholarly study of the religio-political history of Indian Muslims since 1857 see *Wilfred Smith's* recent book "*Modern Islam in India.*"

cutta Madarsa were being abolished, a mammoth meeting of Muslims was called to lodge a protest. But the spirit of that meeting of protest had nothing in common with the spirit of similar meetings today. Dr. Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji says : "Be it said to the credit of the organisers of the meeting that the objection lodged was not directed against favouritism towards the Hindus, but against attempts at the religious conversion of the natives, Hindu and Muslim alike, through the encouragement of English education."² But in 1856 the Mohammedan Association and the National Mohammedan Association were founded in Calcutta by Muslims who had had English education. And for the first time the demand was made for separate Muslim educational institutions. In 1872 the Aligarh College (now the Aligarh Muslim University) came into existence. It did not take long for the Aligarh School of politicians to develop

² *Modern Indian Culture*, pp. 119-20 c. f. Prof. Humayun Kabir's excellent recent booklet "*Muslim Politics since 1902*."

which has always been noted for its separatist bias. In 1881 the National Mohammedan Association presented a memorial to Lord Ripon in which it asked the Government to adopt a new policy with regard to the education of Muslims. It argued that this was the only way in which the position of the Muslim community could be improved.

Apparently, the Central Government expected some such move on the part of the Mohammedan Association. It lost no time in telling the Muslims that the qualification for higher jobs could be nothing other than examination results. But, and this was the mischief, the Government suggested that the High Courts, Local Governments and local officers could "redress the inequality" in the proportion of Hindu and Muslim Government servants. If the Local Governments and local officers had to be impressed, the only way to do it was to have separate representation on the local governing bodies. Accordingly, perhaps as British Imperialism desired, in 1883 Mr. M. Yusuf claimed 'separate representation' on two grounds:

that education can only be acquired by practice ; and that when there is party spirit and angry feeling between the two classes of people, it is necessary to reserve power for the representation of the minority. This was the beginning of sectarianism in politics. After more than eleven centuries of racial and cultural fusion the two communities were set at each other's throat. The bone of contention was Government service. The Morley-Minto Reforms astutely gave official recognition to the separatist theory. Pakistan is the logical conclusion of the Morley-Minto doctrine of 'separate representation.'

The economic interests of the English-educated middle class gave communalism its political hold, while the social barrier of caste gave it its religious colouring. Thence, through the perverted eloquence of rabid Hindus and Muslims *communalism* developed into a full-fledged religio-political and socio-economic bird of ill omen. And yet, true as this is, it does not mean that there are no social or political traditions which

are common. Dr. Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji cites the example of the Kayasthas and Kashmiri Brahmins of the United Provinces who 'in their dress, food, etiquette, language, even in some of their intimate customs, are as Islamic as any Muslim Leaguer'. In the matter of domestic and social obligations there is marked kinship. Both Hindus and Muslims live under the joint-family system. In the political sphere the Momins and Ahrars, the Nationalist Muslims and the Jamait-ul-Ulema have gravitated towards the Congress ideology and in opposition to the Muslim League.

Since communal disruption gives Imperialism its apology for exploiting 400,000,000 people, Imperialist policy aims at keeping communalism in the saddle. We have put our faith in Hindu-Muslim Pacts neglecting to foster impacts between the life, thought, and activities of the various communal groups. We have been professing goodwill long and loudly instead of confessing our mutual need of each other. We have largely endeavoured to handle the question of

unity through the political machine, mechanistically, and have neglected the personal and social urges. Thus we have allowed the rulers, with all the diabolical sagacity of rulers, to sow seeds of disintegration in this very soil of personal and social urges. Personal honours, however hollow, social security and a chance for expansion, however high the price, and economic allurements, however iniquitous, have been used with all but Chanakyan heartlessness to divide those who were thrown together by destiny to become one people, proud of one national allegiance, free to live their individual lives as seemed best to them for their own and the nation's good.

In spite of the disruptive attempts of self-centred agencies the process of integration has not been thwarted. Through a survey of areas in which the process has not been disturbed seriously we can arrive inductively at the essentials of national unity. In Kashmere, where the majority is Muslim and the ruler Hindu, and in Hyderabad, where the majority is Hindu and the ruler Muslim, there have been fewer manifestations

of gangsterism and conflict than in Sindh and Dacca which are under British rule. *A national government is more conducive to inter-communal harmony than a foreign paramount power.* If common traditions of work, cultural and intellectual activity determine that consciousness of kind which is the heart of all unity then it follows that a national government is the best agent to foster, and, wherever necessary, create these traditions. No foreign power can ever be fit to function in relation to national traditions as effectively as a national government. The foreign power in order to gain and safeguard its paramount position will be prone to disrupt the more delicate of these traditions. Sociology only reinforces the lessons of History that a national government is the first essential for the development of an integrated nation just as free will is the first essential for the development of an integrated personality.

In thousands of villages all over India there are comparatively more amicable relations between Hindus and Muslims than in towns. Villages are more or less remote from the machinations of

Imperialism. Consequently, villages are able to preserve a sane consciousness of inter-dependence and inter-relation. Mutual adjustments are made on all sides without bargaining. *The consciousness of inter-dependence is the second essential for national integration.* It is the first step towards a consciousness of kind. The feeling of inter-dependence leads to the awareness that we are one people, one nation, united by common needs and bound together by the inescapable facts of life. When on the contrary any one group feels that it depends not on other national groups but on the foreign power, naturally, its axis of loyalty will shift. Unity is always the outcome of a feeling of inter-relatedness.

In revolutionary organisations such as the Congress, the Trade Union or Kisan Sabha, the Communist Party of India or the Student Federation, there is an enthusiastic give-and-take between members of various communities. *A revolutionary outlook is the third essential for national integration.* On the surface there may seem to be greater unity among conservatives. How

often have we not seen a ponderous conservative climbing over benches to hail a fellow conservative who has perhaps defended the *status quo* with all the bull-dog's tenacity ! But the unity of conservatives is a unity-in-opposition. They will agree in a chorus of condemnation against radicals. They will unite to oppose change. But when there is no opposition they are notoriously suspicious of one another. On the other hand, a revolutionary outlook binds men together not only through common suffering and struggle but also through common revaluation and common efforts to think, feel, and act so as to change the old order of things. It helps to build common intellectual traditions and forges links of new values. Not 'common property interests or common rights and privileges but common adventure and a common faith in the need for change inspire the unity of revolutionaries.

The fourth essential is the creation of national celebrations, at once meaningful and colourful, capable of animating Indians to participate as

Indians, outside the barbed wire-fences of communalism. The value of such national festivals lies chiefly in their psychological effect. As a collective expression of group loyalty above all sub-national differences, these festivals will be very effective. They will nurture consciousness of kind by giving opportunities for mass expressions of that consciousness. Participating in these national celebrations together, men and women of all creeds and castes and classes, will share that wholesome feeling of united strength which is born of mass activity. At the same time these national festivals will harness social forces for the promotion of inter-communal unity.

When other groups join to celebrate a national festival no group will choose to hold back and make itself a target of scorn. The gregarious instinct is a very important factor in developing national consciousness. Fascism has shown how far this instinct can be used to bring about solid unity and unified action. While we need not parley with Fascism we ought to be sagacious enough to turn to good account what

others may have abused. But, of course, national celebrations can hardly be expected under foreign rule.

It is needless to press the point further that national integration entailing communal harmony demands freedom as a pre-condition. To talk of *unity* without integration is to put the cart before the horse. To think of *integration* without a national government is to reckon without the host. For only a national government can undertake with any adequacy the responsibility of producing the four essentials for integration and of controlling and directing emergent social revolutions. It is astonishing that our British and American critics should persist in wrapping themselves in the transparent fallacy that unity must precede freedom. They would have Prometheus build a bridge while he is still chained to a rock. They would see the fruit before they are pleased to allow the tree to be planted. Could despotism be more perverse? Could perversity be more monstrous? Unity, progress, a sense of loyalty, and national well-being are the fruits of

liberty. And that human birth-right of liberty is conceded to the puny countries which were taken by the Nazi army like a handful of berries but denied to India. Such is the justice and the purblindness of the Atlantic Charter which is expected to inspire the Indian nation to go into rapturous efforts on behalf of the victory of the nations signing that in famous declaration of racial discrimination.

And yet let us be charitable when there is ample justification for us to call down fire from heaven to consume the priests of Moloch. We, who have kept company for centuries with privation and pain, we, who have known hunger and want and oppression and have learned from our sufferings the Promethean dignity of the unconquerable, can afford to pity those who know not what they do. Let us remember that the relentless forces of history have used Britain as an unconscious instrument to prepare India and the rest of Asia for revolutionary progress only to cast the instrument aside when the historical purpose is fulfilled. And, remembering this, let

us get on with our difficult task. We must cultivate a revolutionary outlook. With infinite patience and courage and good humour we must work to arrest disintegrating forces in whatever form they may appear. Individuals and organisations aroused by an ideal of freedom must create opportunities for co-operation along inter-communal lines. The Constructive Programme of the Congress, if it were worked in all the provinces with half the enthusiasm manifest during elections, would assuredly lend itself to co-operative effort. The antics of politicians will not affect the communal problem. It is the educated will of the people that must be harnessed for the purpose of vital integration. Communalism is the anti-thesis of the tribalism of the caste system, thrown up by the dialectical movement of history to lead India through conflict to a higher stage of social and national unification. Communalism cannot live for ever. It is necessarily self-negating. It is creating the conditions for its own destruction. But we can co-operate with the historical process to expedite

the birth of an India we have dreamed of for generations, which shall not be a beggar-maid sitting beside the highway of Anglo-American traffic and commerce, but a Queen-Mother enthroned on 400,000,000 hearts, wearing the crown of the joyous devotion of 400 million Indians. It will not be **Hindustan** or **Pakistan**. It will be **Viristan**, **Azadistan**, the land of the brave and the free, where justice and brotherhood are not unattainable ideals but the accepted law of the land.

CHAPTER IV

GARIBISTAN—LAND OF THE POOR

Nature intended that India should be a country flowing with milk and honey. But it has become a land of unashamed beggary. Nature intended that India should be a land without internal frontiers. But it has become a land of proverbial disunion. Are the division and beggary related as cause and effect? Geographically, India is one and indivisible. That the passage of centuries brought foreign racial, religious and cultural elements into the country was nothing unusual. No country, except inhospitable tracts in the Equatorial or Polar regions, has been isolated from the historical process of racial and cultural intermingling. Every country has more than one racial unit represented in its membership. Even petty states such as Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Albania and others, each smaller than half of an Indian province, have their minority problems. Since migration, both of races and

ideas, has been in process for centuries, no country is exempt from the communal problem. Although it is true that in India the existence of the caste system has complicated matters considerably, it is, nevertheless, wrong to think that of all countries in the world India alone is faced with the awful problem of bringing competing group-interests into national harmony.

But although every country in the world has some form of the minority problem, not every country has the misfortune to be open to the meddlesome ways of Imperialism. British Imperialism has become an expert in handling the apple of discord. In Europe the British adopted a 'split-up' policy and found it profitable. Could the leopard change his spots when he came to India? Accordingly, Britain has created psychological, cultural and political frontiers within India since the Morley-Minto Reforms. Since then, too, Britain has drummed it into our ears and bruited it abroad that Indians are like ill-natured, quarrelsome children unable to agree among themselves. Thus, the British Nurse was

needed to keep some at their lessons and others at indoor games. And what if we become too obstreperous for the Nurse? The British Butler was sent to help her. To any but the most naive it is quite evident that the Nurse and Butler can continue in India only so long as we remain quarrelsome children. If we grow up and begin to live reasonably as adults should, the Nurse and Butler will have to quit India. Does our disunity have any cash value? Probably if more of us understood the cash value of communalism we would do our best to stop this process of disintegration and death.

When the salaries of the Civil Servants, euphemistically so called, have been paid, and the pensions and the interest on the sterling debt have been remitted to England, and the Army has been satisfied, or when the British Nurse and Butler have been paid their dues, about 10% of the Indian revenue is left over to be used on India. Britain has financial interests in India which are so huge as to justify a Civil and Military Budget that has no parallel anywhere in

the world. The total British investments in India were estimated to be nearly £ 1,000 million while the total foreign investments of Britain amounted to £ 4,000 million. So that the amount invested in India by Britain is one-fourth of her total world investments. India pays about Rs. 65 crores every year only as interest on this capital. What was this capital used for ? A small fraction was used for irrigation and railways. But the colossal Public Debt of India is what it is because huge sums have been spent on unproductive purposes including foreign wars exclusively in the interests of Britain. In 1857 India had to pay £ 600,000 for the Abyssinian War ; in 1875, £41,000 for the Perak Expedition ; £ 17, 000, 000 for the Second Afghan War ; in 1882, £ 1,200,000 for the Egyptian Operations ; £ 1,300,000 for the expedition on the North-West Frontier in 1882-91; in 1886, £4.7 million for the Burma War ; and £ 250 million for World War I. Was this colossal expenditure incurred in the interests of the minorities which are very dear to the Secretaries of State for India and the Viceroys ?

Some of the ruinous results of this economic drain on India is that nation-building activities cannot be undertaken. In 1930-31 the expenditure on Education per head of the population was one rupee. (It has decreased to about 8 or 9 annas now). Whereas, the corresponding figure per head for Japan in 1930-31 was Rs. 11, for the United Kingdom Rs. 32, for Canada Rs. 48, for the U.S.A. Rs. 65. The Soviet Union spent Rs. 158 per head of the population under instruction in the first Five-Year Plan. Is this how Britain has discharged her much-vaunted 'trusteeship' ? And have not Hindus and Muslims suffered alike ? If national education has been neglected, surely, all communities have been affected. If 72% of the Indian population is illiterate, every community proportionally shares the misfortune and disgrace. Which is more important at the moment : to fight over the increase of an anna or two for Hindi or Urdu instruction or to unite and bring about that state of things in which crores of rupees will be spent on Education ?

Since only 25 per cent of the Indian

revenue is available for Medical and Public Health services, what can we expect but the highest death-rate of the world ? From 1920-30 the average death-rate in British India was 24.5 per thousand of the total population. The corresponding death-rate in Japan was 18.17, in Germany 11.1, in the United Kingdom 12.5. Whereas the average expectation of life in Japan is 44.5 years, in England 57.6 years, in America 56.4 years, in India it is only 26.7 years. Does *every* community not lose its thousands in the prime of youth ? Preventible diseases take a heavy toll because adequate funds are not available for medical relief and public health. Epidemics, once they start, ravage whole areas because sanitary conditions are allowed to be dreadfully poor. But more than these, and worse than these, the per capita income in India is so absurdly low that starvation and malnutrition are common everywhere. Is this allowed by Britain in the interests of keeping law and order amongst rioting communities ? Is this another meaning of 'trusteeship' ? And will this 'trusteeship' not

continue so long as we continue to wrangle among ourselves over a mess of pottage ?

Indeed, Hindustan has been turned into *Garibistan*. Compare the per capita income as it is in India with what it is in other countries and the contrast is enough to give us goose-flesh. By the most generous estimate the income per head in India is Rs. 82, while in Japan it is Rs. 271, in France Rs. 636, in the United Kingdom Rs. 1,092, in Canada Rs. 1,268, and in America Rs. 2,053. Why is this so ? British propaganda has made people believe that the lethargy of the Indian *kisan* and *mazdoor* is chiefly responsible. The heat of the tropical sun has not increased since the advent of the British. Hence, the Indian *kisan* and *mazdoor*, if he is more lazy and less energetic now, must be a victim of undernourishment, despair, and circumstances beyond his control. Take the matter of land revenue. In 1698, under Moghul rule, the land tax was Rs. 301 for an area of 1,963 acres. In 1823, after the British occupation, it was Rs. 2,121 for an area of 2,089 acres. Along with

this the destruction of cottage industries and the ineffectual growth of modern industries have together increased the pressure on the land. In 1881, 58% of the people lived on the land. In 1927 the Linlithgow Commission reported that 73.9% lived on the land. Compare this with other countries. In Japan 50.3% depend on the land, in France 38%, in Germany 30.3%, in Canada 31.2%, and in America 22%. What can be expected but a steady decline of agriculture? In India one acre produces 1,357 lbs of rice and 652 lbs of wheat, whereas in Japan the average yield per acre is 2,767 lbs rice and 1,508 lbs wheat; in Egypt it is 2,356 lbs rice and 1,688 lbs wheat; in Italy it is 4,601 lbs rice; and in the United Kingdom it is 1,812 lbs wheat. The Indian soil has deteriorated so thoroughly that its yield is the lowest. And so the total peasants' debt which in 1921 amounted to £ 400 million rose in ten years to £ 675 million and in the next six years to £ 1,350 million. Under such conditions of slow death could the British or American or any other cultivator manifest greater energy and ambition?

We cheerfully go on calling each other names and allow the teeming millions of our people to die by inches. Does any community, major or minor, escape the inevitable results of this state of Indian agriculture ? Are these pitiable conditions allowed to exist so as to inspire better relations between Hindus and Muslims ?

Less than 2% of the Indian revenue is available for Agriculture and Industries, both departments started after the War of 1914-18. Why should India not be industrially backward ? But the fateful enormity of this backwardness is not generally realised. Whereas in other countries many thousands were drawn into industrial occupations, for example, in Germany between 1870 and 1914 about 25 million people went from the villages into industry, but in India between 1911 and 1931 the number of those engaged in industry decreased by 2 millions. In 1930 there were only 8,148 industrial organisations in British India and the total capital of these large-scale industries was estimated at Rs. 700 crores of which about Rs. 300 crores belonged to Indians.

In the United Kingdom in 1928 there were 107,500 or more industrial organisations with a total investment of Rs. 7,067 crores. Thus with a population which is 13% of the Indian population the United Kingdom had about 23 times the total Indian capital invested in industries. In other words, if in India one rupee is invested for 100 people, in the United Kingdom Rs. 23 are invested for 13 people. America with a population which is 35% of the Indian population had about 75 times the total Indian capital invested in industry. Would it not be far more beneficial for all concerned if the various communal organisations took a vacation from their wordy warfare and combined forces to develop the industrial potential of India ?

Industrial expansion would be a welcome relief for the 35 millions or more who are landless labourers. Nature has provided for them. India does not lack natural resources. It is said that India has not less than 60,000 million tons of coal in her mines. She only produces 22 million tons per year. At this rate she can be sure of

not exhausting the present supply for two thousand years. Apart from the already known tracts, in Northern and Central India there are huge deposits of iron. It is believed they would yield over 3,000 million tons of iron. But we have to import one million tons of steel every year from foreign countries. In 1939 we paid Rs. 370 lakhs for machinery. Next to Soviet Russia, India is the world's largest producer of manganese. But we export most of it dust cheap to America and other countries. India has potential water power resources of about 27 million horse power, but the hydro-electric power actually developed is 0.8 of a million or only 3% of the potential, whereas Japan has developed 37% of her potential, Germany 55%, Switzerland 72%. We continue to make this criminal waste possible, we continue to keep ourselves poverty-stricken, undernourished and unprogressive for the satisfaction of throwing tar-bombs at each other. In fact we are so busy manufacturing ill-will that we have no time to unite and conquer poverty which is the foe in our midst.

Surely, the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League, the Anglo-Indian Association and the Council of Indian Christians, and all the other communal organisations, are not blind to the suicidal effects of internal dissension? The disintegrating process, which their communal antagonism furthers profits no one. The unimaginable burden of taxes that India bears, the educational backwardness, the sad state of public health, the agricultural deterioration and industrial deficiency, the ruthless exploitation and horribly low per capita income together keep Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs, Harijans and all alike in blood-consuming poverty, perpetual darkness and despair. No community is or can be immune from the calamitous results of this state of things. Perhaps, if we understood communalism in terms of its cash value, in terms of the hundreds of crores of rupees that we lose more of us would take up the cause of decommunalisation. When India has become *Garibistan*, the Land of the Poor, common sense demands that we first jointly make it rich and then claim our

rights. But, instead, we encourage Britain to use all kinds of specious arguments to persuade the world that the presence of the British Nurse and Butler is very necessary in our midst to keep law and order among starving, physically deteriorating people. And on the maintenance of this law and order 90% of India's revenue must be spent. One is tempted to quote Mark Antony's, words:

O Wisdom ! thou art fled to brutish beasts.
And men have lost their reason !"

It may be argued that part of this fabulous expenditure is meant for India's defence, that since India, weakened by her internal dissensions, is unable to defend herself, she needs the presence of the British. Has Britain protected India against illiteracy, famine, floods, disease, and national deterioration ? But apart from this, let us test the validity of imperialist logic.

Suppose the same argument were used for the little countries that have been annexed by the Nazi Government, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Denmark and others, every one of them much

smaller than India. Manifestly these countries were incapable of defending themselves against invasion and had serious disagreement among themselves. Nazi propaganda like imperialistic propaganda, Nazi fifth columns like the communalists and princes, the fifth columns of British imperialism in India, had created a good deal of disunity. Are we not driven by the logic of British imperialism to the cruel conclusion that it was just as good for the Nazi Government to take charge of these countries? The Nazi Government can defend these countries better and lend every aid to promote internal harmony. But the cruel absurdity of such an argument and such a conclusion with regard to India's relation with Britain does not occur to the British Government or its henchmen.

Again, there is much more serious disagreement between large and important sections of Indian opinion and the British Government than there is among various parties of Indians themselves. So, by the logic of the former Viceroy's statement, the present authorities should not be

trusted with the responsibility of Government. Efforts should be made to bring in the United States, perhaps, or Soviet Russia, and let their representatives run the Indian Government because there is serious disagreement between Indians and British imperialists and it is wrong to force any group or party in India to accept a Government in which it has little or no confidence !

India is not in a position to govern herself. But she is fit to be exploited. As long as she allows herself to be exploited will she be in a position to govern herself ? India's demand for freedom and unity is a demand to save India from slow death. It cannot be waived aside as a fanciful vagary of impudent agitators.

When the Viceroy is unable to make a statement that would make it possible for the people's (Congress) Ministries to return to office in the majority of the provinces; when the Viceroy is unable to make a statement that even remotely satisfies the aspirations and demands of the large majority party which represents many more

sections of Indian opinion than all the other parties put together ; how does he expect the Government to have Indian collaboration at the Centre ?

Let not the British Government in the arrogance of power conclude that their repressive measures can whip the Indian people into line with imperialistic wishes. That day is gone. Every offer such as the one made by the Viceroy in 1939, flouting the legitimate demands of the National Congress, which is by sheer bulk, by its inter-communal basis, as well as by the moral authority gained through sacrifice, the most authentic representative of the Indian people, every such addition of insult to injury pulls out one more girder from the future bridge between India and Britain. Such tactics have driven many moderates into the Congress camp. Such tactics have made India reject Dominion Status altogether. Such tactics will only succeed at last in alienating Indian goodwill from Britain, completely and for ever.

The moral contradictions of imperialism have landed Britain in the present crisis. She

has sought to justify her own imperialistic enslavement of India in sonorous phrases and she has sought to stand as the Palladin of liberty in Europe. The inherent contradiction in her policy has rendered it impossible for her to defend the liberty of Europe and must sooner or later make it impossible for her to retain her hold on India.

But with the invader at her and our gates Britain should free herself of all moral contradictions so as to be able, unhampered by inner divisions, to resist the imminent aggression. At this hour when Britain needs all her moral resources to strengthen her fortitude and invigorate her action, she cannot afford to keep herself tied up in the self-frustrating moral contradictions of imperialism. She should face the inescapable fact that, at the latest at the end of this war, imperialism will be buried. Its death-warrant was signed at Singapore. Will Britain jeopardise her national security by allowing her national integrity to be tangled up in hopeless contradictions? Or will she have the wisdom to act courageously and rid herself of the self-negating anomalies of

imperialist policy, implement India's freedom, and thus be assured of the moral conditions for victory ?

We hope, with all our hearts, that in the case of Britain it is not true that 'God confuses those whom He would destroy'. We hope with all our hearts that Britain proves invincible. Our deepest sympathies go out to the British people in this hour of their trial. The British people are not responsible for the crime of empire. Although we are resolved to fight the forces of imperialism, we can sympathise with the masses of the British people. And it is for their sakes, for the sake of what they have stood for in the past, for the sake of their past heroism, that we wish their representatives, who steer their Government, would take to heart the lessons of history before it is too late.

Perhaps, the history of the Jews, God's chosen people, better than the history of any other race, shows how a people who have unjust relations with others, who have moral contradictions within themselves and in their own social and

political dealings, prove weak and helpless before an aggressor. If destiny could use Nebuchadnezzar to draw the Jewish people out of the tightening noose of hypocrisy and moral inconsistencies, can it not use Hitler to draw another people from a similar noose? Will Britain not heed the intimations of Eternal Justice and act in her relationship with India in such a way as to regain her moral integrity for the grim struggle ahead?

Nevertheless, it is not enough to look at Britain's side of the picture. We must consider with scrupulous honesty how we, individually and collectively, can further the process of national integration to the end that India, blessed with great natural resources and man power, may again flourish and be among the prosperous, happy and progressive nations of the earth, as she once was. Nothing can furnish as strong an incentive to individuals, communal groups and political parties to foster the spirit of All-India nationalism as a sober consideration of the cash value of disunity. Even if the Two-Nations theory be granted, will a divided India

be prosperous? Will a divided India be progressive? Will a divided India be safe? Will a divided India be happy and at peace with herself and her neighbours? Will a divided India be able to manifest that splendid national life which Soviet Russia has manifested in countless deeds of immortal heroism? Unity is strength. But more than that, unity is wealth. Unity is greatness. Unity is the life-blood of a nation. It is the solemn duty of every Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi, Harijan, of every Indian, to do his utmost to the end that India, meant by nature and social history and common suffering to be one unit, shall develop into a well-integrated nation, allowing for genuine differences of religion, language, manners and customs, but resisting disruption and internal division with undaunted will.

CHAPTER V

NAPAKISTAN—LAND OF CORRUPTION

The British War Cabinet was up against a task too vast and too exacting for its war-time resources. It is, of course, a Herculean task to devise something that will please Amery and Churchill and the Duke of Devonshire and at the same time be acceptable to the Congress, the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha, the Sikhs and the No-party Party, the Chamber of Princes and the Chamber of Commerce, and yet not displease Canada, Australia and British South Africa. Under the circumstances they turned out a good model of compromise. If only our own freedom was not being compromised by the proposal but the freedom of some other people, we could have eulogised the scheme as a paragon of masterly statecraft! At any rate, one must be fair-minded enough to appreciate the feat they have achieved. Appear-

ing to take an epoch-making somersault they have actually remained stationary.

On being asked by an officious Press representative if Britain's proposal conceded "Pakistan", Sir Stafford Cripps is reported to have promptly answered: "Certainly not!" He was right. It was not even Pakistan. It was *Napakistan*. At least Pakistan had the virtue of being an honest and frank proposal based on a conceivable, even though unfortunate, theory of possible infringement of Muslim rights. Britain's *Napakistan* proposal was a diplomatic manoeuvre to vivisect India and leave sections to spread disease and contamination over the whole land. The province, which, prompted by ignorance, fear, prejudice and skillfully conducted propaganda, refused to accede to the Constitution of Free India would naturally make itself the "untouchable." The psychological effect of any such scheme will be disastrous alike to the province concerned and the rest of the nation. It will create a hundred new problems, economic, fiscal, exchange of services, etc., and solve none of the old ones.

Politically, it will be a curse in disguise.

But economically any Balkanisation of India will be as ruinous and as tragic as the amputation of the arms and legs of a man. The economic interdependence of the various provinces makes any separatist theory not only untenable but unthinkable. For example, the sugar that is largely manufactured in Bihar and the United Provinces sweetens the tea in Bombay and the coffee in Madras and delights the hearts of millions of children all over India. The jute that is produced in Bengal supplies the whole of the country with gunny-bags without which the housewife no less than the grain merchant would find life very trying. Bombay and Madras produce the bulk of cotton textiles which are needed in the remotest villages of every district. Bihar and Bengal are becoming the centre of the heavy iron and steel industry from where north and south and all the tract lying in between will get their supplies. The forests of the Himalayan foot-hills, the Western Ghats and Assam must furnish all the timber required by the 400

million people of India. The woollen goods of the north provide warmth to the rest of the country. The western part supplies most of the salt without which cattle no less than human beings would perish in many large areas. Whether it is from the point of view of minerals or food-grains, raw materials or manufactured goods, India is an inter-related and interdependent unit.

Does it not seem that the Crippses, Griggs, Couplands, Jinnahs, and their British and Indian ilk, by Balkanising India want to arrest her economic development and shatter her economic solidarity? The industrial expansion and the economic progress of the country demand that it be an undivided unit, each part free to exchange its products with other parts for those materials which it needs. A unitary India can be almost as self-sufficient as the United States and assuredly more self-sufficient than Britain. International trade relations will prove more beneficial for India if she is an economic and a political unit, for the obvious reason that as a unitary nation her bargaining power, to use

unvarnished terms, will be definitely higher than it can ever be if India is broken up into two or more states. Even the Viceroy could see this much. In a speech in Calcutta in December 1942 he said : "Geographically, India for practical purposes is one. I would judge it to be as important as it ever was in the past, nay, more important, that we should seek to conserve that unity.....That that would be a desirable aim no one, gentlemen, can doubt who tests that proposition in terms of foreign policy, of tariff policy, of defence policy, of industrial development. Can India speak with the authority that she is entitled to claim? Can she play her part effectively at international discussions, at discussions with the other parts of the Empire, if she is to speak with two voices?"

As far as we know the Pakistan tract has very little gold. Its fiscal economy will necessarily suffer. Exchange rates will be against those states which cannot maintain a gold standard. India can certainly afford to have a gold standard. The total value of gold exported

from India since Britain went off the gold standard, stood at Rs. 2,993,074,345, in the first week of March 1937. When India does not under pressure have to export so much gold, exchange rates ought to be in her favour. But if she is divided, internal and foreign trade competition will mean tariff walls. These tariff walls will mean on the one hand economic insufficiency, and, on the other, resentment and hatred. In time this ill-will must lead to conflict. But even if it does not lead to conflict, in times of scarcity in any one part there will be no claim on other parts which may be in a position to help.

A glaring example is before our eyes. Was the tragic food-crisis in Bengal restricted to Hindus or Muslims? Did all not suffer the pangs of hunger, the horrors of being attacked by jackals while still alive, the anguish of helplessly looking at their children writhe in mortal throes without hope of succour? Famine or drought, scarcity of any kind can never affect people on a communal basis. Hindus,

Muslims and Christians alike died of starvation by the thousands in Bengal because the supply of food-grains proved to be insufficient. Let separatists take to heart the lesson dramatised with grim realism in Bengal. No province of India is self-sufficient. No province of India should be torn asunder from the parent country. Cultural, linguistic, religious and political differences are secondary. Economic unity is the primary need. Without it there can be no security for any part. Without it there can be no stability. Without security from food-crises, without economic stability what will any one do with hoarding cultural and religious differences?

Conditions as they are today, the need for the exchange of essential raw materials and staple food-grains as well as surplus manufactured goods, the need for stable and profitable currency, the need for efficient transport and communications to maintain beneficial trade relations and defence lines no less than the tremendous cost and complex technique of modern defence, and above

all, the international demand for larger and more widespread co-operation, all render the necessity of a united Indian nation ten times more urgent than ever before. Perhaps, it was to heighten this consciousness of India's united greatness and self-sufficiency that Akbar instituted the Muharram celebration with the *Taziya* so that the Muslim may find in India his Mecca and his Medina. No Muslim country other than India uses the *Taziya* for Muharram. In fact, Muslims elsewhere call Indian Muslims 'idolaters' because of it. But since the time of Akbar, as that great and far-sighted Emperor wished, the Indian Muslim is able without going abroad to rehearse on Indian soil that part of Islamic history which is commemorated by the *Taziya*. Perhaps, it has been to deepen this consciousness of India's essential economic and cultural unity that the Hindu has been taught when he bathes to pray :
"O ye, Ganges, Jamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu, Kaveri ! Mingle your sacred waters in this water that I may be purified !"

And yet Sir Stafford could appeal that his proposal for the vivisection of India be taken *seriously*. To appeal to us to be serious is like carrying coals to Newcastle. Indians are by nature serious. Circumstances make us doubly serious. Our professional jesters are so serious that they usually explain the serious import of the jest in parenthesis. Our professional politicians are so serious that they cling grimly to prehistoric creeds with admirable consistency. And yet all one's seriousness is exploded into chuckles every time one reads Sir Stafford's preamble. Indeed, by the time one has reached Sir Stafford's peroration if the chuckles do not get amplified into veritable guffaws, it is only in deference to the earnestness of a knightly Labourite. In all seriousness, however, one cannot help feeling that the mountain was in travail, with expert British physicians and surgeons in attendance, but brought forth a wee mouse.

Is it not strange that Amery, Cripps and Churchill should all have forgotten Canada's

bitter hostility between the Catholic (French) and the Protestant (British) Canadians which was much worse than anything that has happened between the Muslims and Hindus? Canada was not carved into two states. There was no attempt to encourage disruptionists. The world was not told repeatedly of the acute conflict between the French and British Canadians, divided as they are on real religious and cultural scores, cherishing traditional antipathy. There is no record of anything like the Cripps' Proposals being sent to Canada. Britain did not give the French Canadians anything like the power of veto which she has bestowed upon the Muslim League. In fact, Britain showed a good deal of concern that the French and British Canadians should forget their traditional enmity. It is easier for Hindus and Muslims to agree than it is for Catholics and Protestants. The cultural and psychological differences between the French and British are far deeper than those between Hindus and Muslims. Yet all these deep and by no means negligible differences were set

aside and Canada was allowed to frame its own Constitution as a Dominion at the end of World War I. Apparently, under the new Constitution the French and British Canadians are pulling together much better than they did under British rule.

Further, it is amusing that Comrade Cripps, an ardent and conscientious Socialist, coming straight out of the British Embassy at Moscow, should have forgotten how Soviet Russia solved its complicated and seemingly impossible tangle of internal dissensions. The Indian communal problem is nothing compared with the situation as Soviet Russia found it. The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics comprises, not a dozen or so religious communities, but one hundred and eighty different nationalities, with one hundred and fifty-one different languages. Had Comrade Cripps learned nothing from Russia that could be applied with advantage to the Indian situation? Under Tzarist Imperialism the Azerbaidjan Turks and Armenians in Transcaucasia were always at daggers drawn in the most literal sense. In

Central Asia the Uzbeks were constantly fighting with the Turkomans. Sometimes there were fierce riots among Armenian Christians and Azerbaidjan Muslims or Sunni Uzbeks and Shia Tadjiks. The Tzarist regime fomented these dissensions in the interests of the White Russians. After the collapse of Tzarism, disintegrating tendencies were seen on all sides. The Russian Muslims were being drawn by Pan-Islamic slogans. The Georgians, Armenians, Ukrainians and White Russians all alike showed ambitions of setting up their own separate States. But in spite of all these baffling complications, which would probably have driven Amery and Churchill and Savarkar and Jinnah and their kind to the lunatic asylum, the Soviet leaders settled the differences manfully. With sympathetic understanding and firm determination and unflinching loyalty they went ahead, step by step, removing obstacles, inspiring goodwill, creating bonds of unity. They did not split Russia into ten states. They bound together the 180 nationalities into one mighty nation. The unity, strength and national loyalty

of these various groups, once torn by internecine conflict, have made Soviet Russia the bulwark of freedom. History will record in letters of gold the glorious loyalty of the Soviet people under the most terrible ordeals. How did the Soviet leaders avoid making their country a congeries of *Napakistans*? How did they achieve their miraculous national integration?

The pitiable bankruptcy of British statesmanship was compelled to take from the scrap-heap the old formula of Dominion Status, and having refurbished it, send it out dressed in slightly more attractive phrases. Perhaps, at the end of the last War, this proposal might have found favour with the group of constitutionally-minded leaders who then had a considerably large following. But, during the last twenty years, the Congress has done a little more than give India the "Jawahar vest" and the "Gandhi cap". It has inspired the vast masses with confidence in the righteous demand for freedom. It has energised large sections of all communities to take the plunge from conservative to radical

thinking. And, in the near future, the Congress is likely to do more than give India the "Azad achkan" or the "Sarojini ear-rings" or the "Raja dark-glasses". It is going to turn down with resolute daring all humiliating offers and give India the dauntless spirit to fight for and win, without violence, that unqualified and unconditional freedom which alone will lead to the building up of a consolidated, powerful and progressive Sovereign State.

Those of us who have learned to admire the British tradition of Milton and Cromwell, Wordsworth and Shelley, John Stuart Mill and Lord Russell are grieved to see how the British ruling class clings to the mental clothes tailored by Kipling half a century ago. Fashions even for mental clothes have changed a score of times since the Kiplingesque mode was acclaimed by Imperialists. The progress of this War itself seems to be of no moment to British statesmen who continue to derive their inspiration from the dreams of fifty years ago. They roll the sweet thought of inevitable "Allied" victory on their

tongues and press it fondly to their palates. The actual events of the war and the titanic effects of these staggering world-events are treated as a few goals scored by the opponents in a football match. It may be a good way of keeping up one's courage and not losing nerve. But grim realities cannot be ignored without grave peril. The British mind seems woefully incapable of taking in such sudden, far-flung and revolutionary changes in two hemispheres. If only Britain had a few statesmen who could grasp the impending catastrophe realistically and handle the situation with unflinching honesty, they would have forgotten the domestic squabbles for power and imperialist ambitions for exploitation. The course of events would then have been very different. For one thing Sir Stafford would not have been sent to India on a wild goose chase. Instead, perhaps Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru would have been received in London as the Indian ambassador.

In such times when paper is scarce Britain could easily have sent its *Napakistan* in a

quarter of a sheet instead of two sheets. It would have been more precise. "To India We'll take your muzzle off provided you shout for us. We'll remove your manacles provided you strike with us. But our previous obligations oblige us to leave the fetters on your feet. This proposal is serious. It must be accepted or rejected *in toto*." It is not amazing that the *banya* spirit of the British ruling class could conceive of nothing more fundamentally just and equitable. The race of *banyas* the world over has the common feature of wanting to wring the last drop of blood from a victim. But it is regrettable that Sir Stafford, an avowed Labourite and a staunch friend of India and India's cause of freedom, should have considered it an honour to convey such a niggardly proposal to India. A courier who brings unwelcome news is never in an enviable position.

It is unfortunate that Sir Stafford allowed himself to be jockeyed by Mr. Churchill into such an anomalous position. His failure in India is bound to leave him depleted of his mounting

popularity and he may cease to be a potential rival for the British Premiership. Once again India has been used as a pawn (or perhaps this time as a knight!) in the internal politics of Britain to keep the power out of the hands of radicals. We trust he has not taken India's rejection of the British proposal of *Napakistan* too much to heart. He should rejoice that the India he loves so dearly saved herself from a clever trap.

CHAPTER VI

ZATISTAN—LAND OF CASTE

It is exasperating to have new words thrown at us. Yet, sometimes a new word is like a splash of cold water in the face. It wakes one up. Some may then discard their potted thinking. And this is very necessary if one is to enjoy the flavour of new suggestions, or even old ones differently served. So what is *decommunalisation*?

Suppose an impressive All-India Decommunalisation Conference were to be called. For this first Conference of its kind we would insist on the President (or *Quaid e' Azam* or *Rashtrapati* or whatever he be designated) being an agnostic only to ensure complete intellectual honesty. The place of meeting would be decorated with all the varied colours of the rainbow to demonstrate the inter-communal aspect of the gathering. In each corner there would be an immense Tri-coloured Flag, in one with the star

and crescent for the Muslims, in the second with a crown for the Harijans, in the third with a pair of scales for the Hindus, and in the fourth with two hands interlocked for the Indian Christians, Parsis and all the rest. The President, dressed auspiciously to suit such an historic occasion, would have on a *dhoti* and tennis-shirt and short coat showing a neatly knotted green-saffron-white tie, capped with a red fez, with a Punjabi shoe on one foot and a *chappal* on the other. He would make his inaugural speech in Urdu, Hindi and English.

The main resolution, moved by a charming woman from Kashmere and seconded by a practical woman from Madras (women have proved far more inter-communally-minded and far-sighted than quarrelsome men) would read something like this: We, who represent every community of India, big and small, heard-of and unheard-of, ambitious and unambitious, pugnacious and peaceful, have observed the sheer stupidity and waste of living penned up in communal stalls. It is unhealthy, unnatural and unnecessary. We

are not as benighted as our politicians. We, therefore, resolve that all communities be liquidated, and that we henceforth live together as Indians, as one people, even one family, each professing what religion he pleases, but admitting no barriers.

When this was suggested to a fairly liberal Hindu, he exclaimed : "*He Rama* ! These young fellows will ruin the country ! How could I have my brothers live with me if one turned a Christian and the other a Muslim ?" On being asked why he could not let them live with him, he said simply : "Of course, I'll lose caste !" He revealed a very important fact. But for the tribalism of the caste system there might have been no need for the growth of rival communities. The cast-iron irrationality of caste, quite unlike the elasticity of Hinduism, closed the door on any Hindu who accepted Islam or Christianity. He became an outcaste. He was cut adrift from his family, his past, and his rightful inheritance, material and cultural. Such outcastes grew in numbers and were forced by bio-

logical laws to form outcaste communities, which had to be as self-sufficient as possible, as they could have no dealings with Hindus. Almost the same thing happens even today. Well, socially ostracised and isolated in point of traditions these outcaste communities were left to fate or the law of their own development.

These Muslim and Christian communities grew rapidly and every succeeding generation of Muslims and Christians was farther removed from the cultural traditions which should have bound them to Hindus. Clashes of economic interests increased as the years went by and hundreds of new converts came into the respective outcaste communities and acquired property and a desire for trade or agricultural pursuits. Far from there being any social relations between the parent community and its offshoots there was social boycott of one by the other producing resentment and hatred and even a desire for revenge. Under the pressure of such deplorable circumstances a spirit of narrow communalism was bound to emerge. The logic of such events made

national loyalty irrelevant. The political sympathies of these and later other minorities were swayed by a common dread of Hindu power, which could persecute in viciously subtle ways. So caste was producing the conditions for its ultimate dissolution.

The presence of the British rulers in India at this juncture must be reckoned as a factor that fanned the flames. The inflexible restrictions of caste rendered Hindus less useful and more annoying than Muslims to the chartered marauders of the East India Company. The pragmatic consciousness of the Muslim was not alien and enigmatic to the British mind as was the religio-contemplative consciousness of the Hindu. The Englishman was never quite sure he understood the Hindu. But he did understand the Muslim. Men of the temperament of Sir Edwin Arnold and Sir William Jones were only a handful in a hundred years. Even British historians, who are supposed to be trained in impartial evaluation, find themselves in their element when dealing with Muslim rule; but

their pen is baulked when they come to Hindu periods. Facile compliments and quibbling over dates provide a refuge when historical insight is lacking. The British used the Hindus whenever they could, but always with that suspicion with which we regard the unknown. They found greater kinship with the practical Muslim than they could with the mystical Hindu. It was not unnatural that the Muslim found favour with the British rulers and was taken more easily under the spreading imperial wing.

The early Christians who came seventeen hundred years ago became Indianised as their descendants, the Syrian Christians, are even today. But the advent of missionaries and the building up of Mission Compounds a hundred and fifty years ago brought a new element, and an unhealthy one, into the lives of Indian Christians. Henceforth, they lived, thought and acted under the influence of foreign missionaries who provided them with economic security and social status. From them Indian Christians got respectable religious robes for their anti-Hindu

feelings. Simultaneously, they learned to worship everything foreign and deride everything Indian as *pagan*.

William Carey, the great pioneer missionary, enunciated the policy : "Westernise Indians in order to Christianise them." In diverse subtle ways this policy has been implemented. If all westernised Indians did not march to the baptismal font, at least most educated Christians came to be westernised. This sounds innocent enough. In fact, it would do us good to be westernised in some things just as it would be good for Westerners to be Indianised in some ways. If it is a choice, critically made, it is valuable. But when the Indian Christian is pressed by the Mission system to smother his conscience and declare, at least in the presence of missionaries, that British rule is an unmixed blessing for India ; that the Mission system with its glaring inequalities and its theocratic totalitarianism is a god-send ; that Indian culture is of the devil ; that everything Western, from collars and ties to Amery's latest pronouncement, is perfect, it is

nothing short of demoralising. Obviously, it is done in nine out of ten cases for the pragmatic purpose of retaining or securing a Mission job and possibly other missionary favours.

The proof that this is the common practice in Missiandom is to be found in the cases of those Indian Christians who are called "dangerous" by missionaries and safely kept out. They may be qualified abroad and have unquestioned ability and influence. But their unpardonable sin of refusing to be "Yes-men" renders them in the eyes of the Mission system unfit to serve the Church. With scrupulous care they are kept out of all official paths of service, and, of course, out of Mission employment; while, the "Yes-men" both in the employment of the British Government as well as of Missions by the necessity for "loyal submission" have been unable to point out the folly of certain policies or the disasters on the road chosen by the authorities. Follies have been added to folly. The harvest is ripe. Who shall reap it, foreign Missions or the Indian Christian community?

Observant non-Christians, the rank and file no less than leaders, have seen these effects of missionary activities. The best of them, with all the goodwill in the world, and genuine respect for the Christ-impulse, have been disappointed with, at times annoyed at, and ultimately alienated from the missionary enterprise. "A Hindu or Muslim who becomes a Christian is lost to the Motherland," is a common remark one hears from thinking non-Christians. The tragedy is that it is true. With the surge of nationalism which has flooded the country since 1885, no Indian nationalist can help feeling out of sympathy with a movement which by its albinocratic spirit aggravates the bitterness of racial discrimination aroused by British Imperialism and directly or indirectly gains numerous supporters for it from among its converts.

Through the intermediation of missionaries, who were anxious to prove that their 'converts' were loyal assets, Indian Christians sought and found the patronage of the British rulers. The help they rendered to the British during the

Indian Rising of 1857 gave their community and the Missionary enterprise as such a better place in the estimation of the rulers. It was not long before the British got the trump-card in their hands when Muslims and Christians were encouraged openly to claim 'protection' against the Hindu majority group. And from then on to this day one can perceive the deliberate Imperialist game of playing one community off against another.

However, with the spread of schools and hospitals and under the exigencies of railway travel, men and women were brought together as human beings and given a chance to cultivate friendly relations. The growing contingencies of working together in various Government offices and of living together in new towns led Hindus to revise their belief in caste. The ethical denunciations of caste launched by Christians were followed by Brahmosamajist criticisms of the Hindu social structure and soon the Aryasamaj joined the ranks to ridicule caste in vigorous satires. Colleges were by now sending out thou-

sands of Hindus who had tasted the strong wine of western thought on social justice. A silent revolution had started which was pressing the demands of a new nationalism upon the consciousness of India. Unconsciously caste-restrictions were crumbling. The process of national integration was pushing ahead. Inter-communal marriages among the higher classes marked a new stage in the process of integration.

By the eighteen-nineties progressive Hindu reformers were drawing public attention to the fact that the caste system by parcelling Indians into innumerable self-contained cliques not only nurtured the fissiparous tendency proverbially applied to India but prevented the development of a national consciousness. They maintained against the most rabid conservatives that the irrational restrictions of caste excited inter-Indian rivalries and sectional jealousies and prevented any effective collaboration in social and political life. The beneficiaries of a system to be reformed always draw red herrings across the path of reformers. Let us be quite clear who the beneficiaries

of the caste system are. They are not to any very large extent the *Brahmins* or the *Kshatryas*. Predominantly, the beneficiaries of the caste system are the landlords, the mill-lords, the great lords of big business and Chambers of Commerce, and the money-lenders and bankers, most of whom are *Vaisyas* or *Banyas*. The doctrine of caste, invariably illumined by the theory of *karma*, is used to exploit the *mazdur* and the *ryot* much as Christian teachings were used in the West as an opiate to the have-nots. Soon the problems of widow remarriage and educational reform, etc., were being pushed to the fore and were gaining financial support with incredible facility. The caste issue was gradually pushed into the background.

Then came the national upheaval of Congress fame. The outcastes had by now produced a belligerent and capable leader and through him attacked caste with all the virulence that had been fermenting under centuries of oppression. Wittingly or unwittingly, Mahatmaji, then at the peak of his influence, gave them a new name and

a new *communal* platform by instituting the Harijan Sevak Sangh which received large donations from the beneficiaries of the caste system. By retreating to the Hindenburg Line of the Harijan Sevak Sangh Mahatmaji lost a momentous opportunity of routing caste as a religio-politico-socio-economic system and of automatically leaving communalism without a leg to stand on.

Decommunalisation demands the abolition of caste. If there is no hydra-headed monster of caste, Indians will live together, eat together, inter-marry, and have partnership in business together and own and inherit property together, in short, be as one people save for religious observances. In the same family there may be Muslims and Christians and Hindus. Relationships will not be torn asunder. Some of the capital now locked up in families of Hindu capitalists will probably flow normally to non-Hindu groups through family relationships or matrimonial alliances. There will be no excuse for separate communities when the *raison d'être* of separatism is

destroyed. Members of all religious associations will have a chance, now denied to them, of putting their roots back into the cultural traditions of their motherland and of bringing forth the fruits of common nationality and a common loyalty. Within two generations the process of national integration would have advanced beyond decommunalisation to the achievement of consolidated nationhood. The political scene will shift to a new plane. Members of all religious affiliations, according to their *political* beliefs, will belong to all parties. The majority party may have as many Hindu opponents (in the opposition party) as it has supporters, and will constitute a National Government on the basis of the support given by the national electorate to a particular set of political principles, policies and programme. Decommunalisation means a revolutionary change.

Neither the minorities nor the majority community need get disconcerted. By decommunalisation no minority will be betrayed into the hands of the majority. Nor will the majority

community be sold into slavery. The process of decommunalisation is an equalising process. The majority will be shorn of those religious, social, economic and political weapons which the minorities dread because of their iniquitous history. The minorities will be brought out of their little communal trenches into the open field with wider and newer horizons. The result will be a new classification. No one will wear religious labels in public. They will be known as members of political organisations, and these political organisations will come into being according to different political, economic and international policies and creeds. We will no longer think or speak of people as Mr. A is a Hindu, or Mr. B is a Muslim, or Mr. C is an Anglo-Indian or Mr. D is a Harijan or Mr. E is a Parsi. We will think of people as Liberals and Conservatives, Radicals and Fabians, Communists and Black-coats, Progressives and Decadents, and so forth. The new categories will refer not to an individual's private beliefs in religious matters but to his outlook, his world-view, his

political, economic, literary, artistic or social philosophy of life which distinguishes him from or associates him with others. Surely, this is far more reasonable.

It is only because we are so habituated to thinking, feeling and acting within the century-old communal frame-work that our thinking is confused when it is taken out of that frame-work. The process of negating caste and the resultant negation of communalism will not mean that the State will not protect the individual's right to follow whatever religion he chooses, or his right of free speech and association, or his right to compete without handicap for any election, office or position on a national basis. Differences of religion, creed or confession will not prejudice any Indian in matters relating to the enjoyment of civil or political rights, as for instance, the exercise of professions or the setting up of industries, or admission to public employments, functions and honours. And nothing more will be needed. The individual will not need the backing of a communal organisation.

His merit will count. Having his civic rights assured and his economic and cultural interests protected, the individual will be free to think and feel *nationally* and act for the good of the whole national unit. Even Ramsay Macdonald could say: "If India is going to develop a robust political life, there must be room for *national* political parties based upon conceptions of *India's* interest, and not upon conceptions regarding the well-being of any field that is smaller or less comprehensive than the whole of India." With whatever motive Macdonald may have uttered these words, they are, nonetheless, significant enough to be remembered. Decommunalisation implements just this principle. It does nothing if it does not provide room for the development of national political parties pledged to serve India rather than fractional sub-national groups.

The Communal Award, Separate Electorates and such other Machiavellian tactics are meant to break up national loyalty into sub-national perversity. They are meant to make us gradually blind to the interests of the nation as a whole.

by keeping our eyes rivetted to the small circle of communal welfare. Under such a system Maulana Abul Kalam Azad can vote for Mr. Jinnah but not for Jawaharlal Nehru, and Mr. Munshi cannot vote for Mr. Nariman, even if he wanted to, but can vote for Dr. Moonje, even if he does not want to. Amrit Kaur not being able to vote for Sarojini Naidu and not finding an Indian Christian woman of her choice will forfeit her vote. The democracy-loving British have disenfranchised Indians as *Indians*. We have our votes only as Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Anglo-Indians, Parsis and the like. Probably our constitutional representatives are sent to a Parliament of Religions not to a political legislature! Any way, decommunalisation gives the franchise to Indians as Indians and disenfranchises members of sub-national communal groups. India, which has been made into a *Zatistan*, a Land of Castes and Communities, must be given her full national status again. Decommunalisation can wave the magic wand over this *Zatistan* and make it the Indian Nation, united and great.

It is through a process of decommunalisation that the United States can create national unity out of a *melange* of races, languages, cultures and religious sects. Almost every European nationality is to be found in the United States. Emigrants from every part of Europe come with their conflicting variety of cultural, linguistic, racial and sectarian differences. Yet the Catholics and Methodists, the Lutherans and Calvinists, the Anglicans and Baptists, the Christian Scientists and Seventh Day Adventists do not raise communal walls within the national boundaries of America. Between some groups the traditional racial or religious cleavage is deep. But once they become American citizens their racial and religious differences do not constitute distinctions, do not keep one from the other in social and political life. They no longer behave in public as Irish or German or Italian or Russian or Bulgarian or Swede but just as *Americans*. They do not divide in public as 'Catholic and Protestant or Lutheran and Calvinist. They unite as *Americans*. In so doing no one forfeits

any essential right or privilege pertaining to his religious or cultural inheritance, provided it does not infringe on the rights and privileges of others or cause disruption. Through an educational process of decommunalisation these various racial and religious groups are prevented from turning America into a *Zatistan*. If Europeans coming to America can be decommunalised in 15 or 20 years, surely the various minorities in India ought to find no difficulty in being nationalised, when everyone of them has lived in the country for over four generations. When national integration is possible in America out of its unrivalled hodgepodge of races, languages, cultures and sects, it is assuredly possible in India. It may demand a social revolution. It may demand an immediate mental revolution. But it is possible. Decommunalised loyalty to the nation, decommunalised plans for national progress, decommunalised action for India's defence, these are tests of genuine patriotism.

It is in this direction that inter-communal integration is moving. Of course, it could be

accelerated under a People's Government as measures could then be adopted to wean the public mind away from communal to inter-communal ways of thinking, feeling and acting. Is it then a vicious circle? And must we despair? History has ruthless ways of breaking vicious circles and releasing undreamed-of forces for the overthrow of obstructions and obstructionists in its course. The Anti-slavery impulse in America began in a small group of a dozen or less men and gathering force became a mighty torrent that swept all obstructionists through a Civil War until slaves were emancipated. With the vision of the revolutionary and the undimmed faith of the liberationist we must keep our banner, even if ragged, nailed to the mast. Only the unconquerable can fight through defeats till India victoriously regains her lost unity, her lost integrity, her lost freedom.

CHAPTER VII

AZADISTAN—LAND OF THE FREE

Strange ironies of fate creep into the affairs of mice and men. Men arrogantly expect mice to sniff at them and go their way. But mice humbly expect men to chisel and sandpaper these irrationalities to fit into a rational scheme. The ideal of individual and group self-expression (*swadharma*) is today little more than the uniform bleating of sheep. Each man is taught the superstitions, occupation and mode of life of his hereditary caste. That, he is told, is his *swadharma*. He must stick to it as a leech. Originality and the urge to make or do or be something different are piously choked to death in the name of social purity and religious Puritanism. But was it and will it be so always? Mice excitedly squeak "No!"

The Indian heritage declares that contemplation on communion and co-operation with

the Supreme Being enlightens the intellectual nature (*prajna*), refines the emotional nature (*tejasa*), inspires the moral nature (*turiya*) and sanctifies the physical nature (*visva*). Thus the whole unified personality reaches out to discover its purpose and its freedom in a flash of insight (*darshan*). There could not have been a clearer recognition of the four-fold nature of personality. No one group has a monopoly on any one aspect. For instance, the *brahmin* is not all intellect or the *sudra* all body. There may be differences in degree of native endowment and in development. A scholar may not have an athlete's physique just as the athlete may lack the scholar's intellectual capacity. And the scholar may be a *sudra* and the athlete a *brahmin*.

It is in this context of the four-fold analysis of personality that the divisions of caste must be understood and applied to the social structure. The functional or expressional aspects of the four-fold nature of the self and not heredity must be the basis of social grouping. Every normal individual has the physical, the emotional, the

intellectual and the moral nature. The physical nature finds expression chiefly in vocational activity (*artha*), the emotional nature chiefly in creative activity (*kama*), the intellectual nature chiefly in redemptive activity (*moksha*), and the moral nature chiefly in religio-politico-socio-economic activity (*dharma*). If this is so, each individual has latent within his very nature the four expressional castes. He makes his choice by emphasis or outright concentration. Any man is a *sudra* or worker, if he is engaged in vocational activity; a *vaisya* or artisan or artist if he is engaged in creative activity; a *brahmin* or philosopher if he is engaged in redemptive activity; a *kshatrya* or defender of the cultural heritage if he is engaged in legislative activity. The modern terminology should not bias our reactions to this interpretation. It is borne out by conditions as described in Indian literature. Changes in the social *milieu* demand corresponding modifications in interpretation of social values.

Such a classification resolves the invidious

distinctions of the castesystem as it exists, which is clearly a burlesque of the unifying spirit of Indian culture. A man's birth will not determine his caste. His caste will depend on his calling (*swadharma*). A *brahmin* by accident of birth is not always, indeed, is seldom a true *brahmin*. It is quite conceivable that a *sudra*, given the requisite opportunities, may outshine many *brahmins*, as Vasistha's grandson, Parasara did and also Vyasa whose mother was probably a fisherwoman. But the later superstructure imposed on the pure *varnashrama* system by Decadents has crushed its spirit and made it a dead-weight¹. Its essential unity-in-diversity is stultified. Its encrusted snobbery remains. Each caste has become a tribe with all the limitations of tribal deities, taboos and fetishes. A change of profession is denounced. Inter-marriage and inter-dining are prohibited as sinful. The *sudras* are doomed to perpetual inferiority. Their's is

¹ See Swami Dharam Teerath's *Menace of Hindu Imperialism*, Chap. XVIII.

the conquered tribe. It must provide the slaves. The need for sub divisions has led to some three thousand castes, presumably with three thousand distinct *swadharma*s, and a thousand and eight hundred varieties of *brahmins*, presumably knowing Brahma in a thousand and eight hundred different ways, or knowing 1,800 different Brahmas !

To defend the castesystem on the grounds that it has preserved the Indian cultural heritage when the civilisations of Nineveh, Tyre, Babylon, Greece and Rome have passed into decay is to argue that in the old days Chinese women lived long because their feet were distorted in cramping iron shoes. For no culture can survive on the strength of a social gradation which means degradation for two-thirds of the people. To defend it on the basis of *dharma* is to equate *dharma* with injustice. For there can be no justice in tyranny. To defend it on the assumption of natural differences of inheritance and aptitude is to try to walk through a stone wall. For every known psychological law explodes the superstition

that a *sudra* can never have the native endowment to do anything better than what he is forced to do. To defend it on the basis that it promotes the advancement of society to the highest pitch of efficiency is to argue that deterioration is another form of advancement. For history tells us that there was far greater social efficiency 1,000 years ago.

What makes the present form of the caste system pernicious alike to social development and political solidarity is the hereditary strait-jacket imposed on individuals and groups in matters of *swadharma*, social intercourse, opportunities for advancement, and national outlook. These hereditary restrictions in effect make each caste a mutually exclusive and insular tribe which must remain so for all time. Generally speaking each caste-tribe is more interested in tribal politics than the problems that face the nation and is prone to be suspicious of every other group. The fissiparous tendency nourished by the caste system produces, as it must, a great deal of growing discontent, disunity and ill-will.

among Hindus themselves. The only unifying elements are religious superstition, illiteracy and a vague fear of Muslim-Hindu clash¹.

When co-ordination is practically ruled out among the 3,000 or more caste-tribes within the Hindu fold itself, what hope can be cherished for co-ordination between Hindus and other religious groups? In fact caste-tribalism fosters a strong tradition of *subordination* of outcastes. Non-Hindu groups (*Mlechhas*) are openly treated as outcastes. Is it any wonder that some furious Muslim Leaguers try to arouse a similar feeling of superiority among Muslims by referring to Hindus as *Kaffirs*? Their doing so proves irksome to many Hindu leaders because subconsciously they expect *subordination* from outcaste non-Hindus as they do from Hindu outcastes. Even an educated brahmin thought nothing of refusing tea at a Christian friend's (who, by the way, was himself of brahmin stock)

¹ See Swami Dharam Teerath's *Secret of Hindu Sangathan*, especially the cartoons.

but the Hindu was greatly astonished when the same Christian refused his *pan* in public. These are small matters. Yet a large accumulation of such small acts of snobbery has produced barriers which are proving seriously detrimental to the progress of the nation towards freedom, strength and harmony.

Whereas, if it is recognised, as reason demands, that each individual has within himself the four functional or expressional castes related to the four aspects of human personality, the vicious hereditary restriction is removed. Thus there ceases to be any inequality imposed on any individual or group. The emphasis in human relationships is shifted from subordination to co-ordination. With the acceptance of the equality of all men a favourable atmosphere is created for the growth of an efficient democracy in which all have equal opportunities, obligations and rights. Only when the snobbish Hindu mind accepts the principle of equality in theory and practice will the present caste-tribalism come to an end, and with it the pillars supporting socio-economic com-

munalism will collapse. Then communalism will have very little lee-way in the political sphere since a new *comaraderie* is bound to emerge with the establishment of relations of equality and co-ordination in social and economic life. It will be more natural then for Hindus, Muslims and other minorities to realise that the demand for justice implies the obligation to be just ; that the insistence on rights carries the duty to protect the rights of others ; that the privilege of freedom entails the trust to safeguard the freedom of the weak. These implications of equality will then not be as lamentably remote from the public mind as they are today. Then there will be no caste-hierarchy in politics.

When each man, irrespective of the occupation he adopts to earn his living and the religion he follows for his spiritual satisfaction, is free to enjoy the privileges pertaining to common humanity, develop his mind and his talents and find legitimate opportunities to live peacefully, effectively and happily, he will be able to make his maximal contribution to society. Then the

ideal of *swadharma* will begin to have some meaning. Today it has none. *Swadharma* today is the handle of the duplicating machine of Hindu society which produces tens of thousands of stereotyped and thoroughly incompetent *pundits*, *thakurs*, *banyas*, *ahobis* and the like. With the abolition of caste restrictions, society will become an agency of vital control turning *chamars* into Raidases, weavers into Kabirs, *banyas* into Gandhis. It will be an organism rooted not in tribal superstition as it is but in a dynamic socialistic purpose.

A socialist purpose will mean the building of a new social order. It will be a society purged of the old feuds, the old snobbery, the old prejudices, the old bitterness. It will be a structure which has none of the old narrow cells, none of the old shackles. It will not be a prison-house for some. But it will be a refuge for all, accommodating the vast millions of the land, inspiring them with a new self-respect and a new urge to make life beautiful, effective and meaningful. India then will truly be *Azadistan*, the Land of

the Free. Every Indian will belong to one caste, the caste of workers. The only community that exists will be the community of toilers. Rulers and ruled, owners and workers, law-givers and law-abiding citizens, they will be free indeed, together constituting a powerful and free nation of free and mighty millions. When their backs are no longer bent under crushing loads, people will stand up and look at each other face to face and be able to recognise each other as fellow-workers, comrades, brothers. The suspicions and fears that cause all the snarling and snapping among the various castes and communities today will not exist in that atmosphere of comradeship. Equality of opportunity, equality of social status, equality of political rights will cancel all old scores. *Swadharma* will then be equated with *Hamara farz* and both will mean *national duty*.

The educational system that is motivated by a socialist purpose will further the process of national integration. It will train future generations to break down all dividing barricades. It

will inspire them with the will to unite. It will teach them the joy and the meaning of collective living. It will scrap the old thought-moulds and forge new ones. It will enable boys and girls to line up not according to the old, pernicious custom but according to their capacity to work for the all-round development of society, the all-round progress of the Nation. The outcaste will not be the low-born but the indolent idler. Uncomradely behaviour will be a crime. Asoke's dream of religious concord, Akbar's dream of religious fraternity will be fulfilled in that great Confraternity of Socialists, working side by side with happy faces and proud hearts for the collective good, for collective security, and for collective progress. Indeed, Socialism would solve many of India's problems at a stroke.

But Karl Marx or no, caste-marks must go. Then, and not till then, will communalism be uprooted. Many timid minds take shelter behind a feeling that a miracle will be needed to get rid of the caste-pestilence. But such miracles have been

performed through human agency before now. The Germany that Hitler stepped into was the most hopelessly caste-ridden country in Europe. The brahmins included every aristocrat entitled to use *Von* before his name. The *kshatryas* formed a military sub-caste of the aristocracy and supplied the officers. The *vaisyas* were sharply divided into two groups, the educated and the uneducated. Only the former were allowed to serve in the army as 'one-year volunteers' at their own expense and thus purchase the social privilege of becoming 'reserve officers.' The *sudras* were divided into mutually exclusive sub-castes. The postman was the social superior of the artisan. The skilled workman looked down on the manual labourer. The German insistence on *Distanzen* was as pernicious as the Indian insistence on *chhut* (pollution by touch). Yet the Nazi Movement swept aside this deep-rooted caste system of Germany and brought about undreamed-of unity. Can the Hindu Mahasabha not work a similar miracle? Surely, if it entered into an alliance with the All-India Women's Conference,

their united resources could annihilate caste in the public and domestic mind and clear the way on all fronts for the victorious march of decommunalisation. For this invaluable help three portfolios should be reserved for women in every province : Public Health, Local Self-Government and Finance. It would render the National Government uniquely efficient and neutralise the effect of the Opposition Party. For no Opposition Party would ever be able to oppose the charming smiles or intriguing frowns of three women-ministers on the Government Benches. Besides, the work of Finance, Local Self-Government and Public Health would be carried on very efficiently.

Be that as it may, if India is to be *Azadistan* it must abolish all caste-distinctions and caste-patterns of thought and behaviour. Caste and freedom are antithetical. Caste and unity are contradictions. The future for India no less than the world will demand greater co-ordination than ever before. Unless we have co-ordination at home and in our own national life we shall

never be prepared for the larger co-ordination of international relationships. Caste makes co-ordination painful. Like the appendix, the caste system is a relic of a bygone stage of development and causes unnecessary pain to the body politic. It would be a patriotic service if Dr. Jinnah and Dr. Moonje and Dr. Ambedkar would join and perform the necessary operation. Communalism, the chronic appendicitis from which our body politic suffers, would be cured at once. We would have a healthy Nation, sturdy and enterprising, capable of digesting any food and undertaking the most strenuous activity. And for this meritorious surgical service we would gladly award a *jagir* each to the three distinguished doctors, who at present, seem to be amusing themselves at India's expense in doctoring a putrefying corpse.

CHAPTER VIII

VIRISTAN—LAND OF THE BRAVE

Timely gestures of affirmation become acts of loyalty. Just before Cripps came Dr. D. S. Ramachandra Rao, President of the All-India Council of Indian Christians, cabled to Churchill and Cripps: "The All-India Council of Indian Christians supports demand for Indian freedom. *Pray, deal handsomely.*" It gratifies one to observe the marked difference between the cables sent to Mr. Churchill by the Hindu Mahasabha and the Council of Indian Christians. The Indian Christian community, inarticulate as it has been for various reasons, has decidedly raised its voice to affirm the nationalist demand. About the same time Fazlul Huq and the late Allah Bux sent a statement to the British Press demanding freedom for India. The patriotic sentiments expressed by the Nationalist Muslim Conference, and the Harijan criticism of Pakistan and the

Muslim League demand for 50% power expressed by Dr. Ambedkar as "monstrous", make the problem of the minorities seem much smaller. It augurs well for the future. It speaks volumes for the patience of the Congress.

But foul odours do not disappear because we repeat the names of sweet-smelling flowers. Nor does political sectarianism erase itself because leaders of nationalist Muslims, Christians or Harijans support the nationalist stand. These pronouncements are, assuredly, not without their value. Sectarian leaders and groups taking a nationalist stand are as significant as men offering their arms for inoculation in order to put heart into a hesitant crowd. Their action is fully effectual only when all the onlookers, *including those of their own sect as well as those of the majority group*, take the inoculation against sectarianism. If those of the majority group continue to carry the infection of sectarian bias, the epidemic is bound to flare up over and over again, even without aggravation from outside.

In an India unhampered by foreign interests

and a dominant foreign class the chances for engineered clashes will be fewer. Nevertheless, whole-hearted support for the National Government from all sections of India will be forthcoming only if the National Government by 'dealing handsomely' instils confidence into the minorities. Mahayan Gandhism, Akhand Munshism, Pakh Jinnahism, Swadeshi Monjeism and mere Congress Resolutionism will not achieve much towards sectarian harmony. It can be achieved not by loud-speakers but by large hearts. Deeds not creeds are current coin in political relations. Good-will without the will-to-renounce is like the Barmecide feast.

In most cases it is to such a Barmecide feast that Congressmen invite the minorities. As an organisation the Congress is decidedly inter-sectarian. Beyond all doubt the top-notch Congress leaders are a-communal. They think and feel and live outside the fog of communal predictions. Can the same be said of the rest? Could it be said of all those who represented the Congress on seven Provincial Cabinets? If it

is true that those who wear *khadi* are miraculously changed into *nationalists* and no longer feel the throb of sectarianism, if by some mystic power the Gandhi-cap can inculcate Gandhism, then surely we can go ahead with a gay step to meet the future! But if there is any doubt about this, then the future National Government of India will need to show a lively awareness of the roots of sectarian distrust. Merely denying its existence will not avail.

It will not be enough to provide the constitutional mechanics to safeguard the rights of minorities. Of course, the Constitution of emancipated India will be a charter of freedom, justice and equality for every Indian citizen. But, beyond that, it should make it possible for any Indian citizen, regardless of caste, creed or sex, to attain to the highest position, provided he has the required ability. And, further still, it should render it impossible for the majority party by clever manœuvring to follow the Imperialist policy of 'divide and rule.' It will demand moral integrity of sterling worth on the part of the majority

group in the Constituent Assembly. It will demand statesmanship of a high calibre. It can never be repeated too often that statesmanship is not the capacity to outwit others but the capacity for honest thinking beyond the frontiers of party and sect, beyond the blunders of the past and the bitterness of the present. And honest thinking implies steering clear of the enticing Scylla of prejudice and the enchanting Charybdis of mysticism.

An *integrated* India in a fuller sense than *coalition* and in a deeper sense than *unity* is a capital necessity at any time. When an invasion is at our gates it becomes an immediate need of the first magnitude. A nation united for action not assembled for debate, an integrated nation out to win and defend its freedom with all its might not torn with dissentient voices clamouring for sub-national rights, is what we need. This kind of vital unity is the outcome of mutual understanding and reciprocal appreciation, of collective action and common interests. We must be bound together by a common ideology,

by common loyalty, by a common confidence. Ideological misunderstandings or differences can never produce united effort. Sub-national loyalties can never create unity. Diffidence and suspicions can never bring about the fusion of group-interests. The hard-baked realism of Hardy has hardihood enough to commend it. "If way to the Better there be, it exacts a full look at the Worst." Suppose Nationalists (as opposed to communalists) would have a full look at the worst aspects of sectarianism in politics, its springs of economic, religious, social and political fear, its irrationality that comes to the surface in fanatical acts, and the calamitous effects of its continuance. Perhaps, it would lead all Nationalists, regardless of religious and other differences, to launch a consolidated campaign to understand the minorities and enable them to understand the nationalist position, to appreciate their future contribution and enable them to appreciate the nationalist ideology.

Only the most fanatical of fanatics will deny that the minority communities have their res-

pective contributions to offer so as to make our collective national life richer, brighter and more effective. Imagine the national police without daring and resourceful Muslims, the national railways without dependable Anglo-Indians, the national land and air arms without fearless Sikhs and enterprising Parsis, or national education without Indian Christians. Imagine the national cinema without Indian Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Parsi and Anglo-Indian film-stars. Already, they are showing in practice not only how they can brighten the lives of millions but also how they can further the process of decommunalisation. In music and art the Muslim talent will always be in demand. In social arts the Anglo-Indian and Indian Christian talent will always be welcome. For philanthropy and industrial enterprise Parsis will always be sought. To keep the socio-economic machinery functioning smoothly the masses, Harijans and peasants, the indispensable toilers, will always be prized.

History has so arranged it that we are

mutually needed, mutually complementary. We cannot any longer think of a Hindu India or a Muslim India or a Christian India. If we still do, it is either playful perversity or a rhetorical flight of fancy. In spite of rampant communalism, India in the 20th century is being strongly influenced by the revolutionary touch of various non-communal forces. India in the 21st century will be made up of a much richer complexity of non-Hindu, non-Muslim, non-Christian forces shaping a vitally integrated national life.

It should be understood that there is no contradiction involved in saying that the minority groups have their respective contribution to offer to the national life and that decommunalisation is a historical process destined to create a non-communal, national unit. The contribution that we speak of and expect is not the contribution of mutually exclusive enclosures flying different banners. It is the contribution of individuals with different talents, varying environments, special cultural or moral emphases. It is not the socio-economic or religio-political

distinctions of the various minorities that determine their respective contribution. Ways of living, habits of thought, standards of judgment determine the special features which today we associate with particular religious groups. The association is not necessarily true. It is certainly not true for all time. The process of decommunalisation will alter the false association but not the contribution. It will remove all barriers, socio-economic as well as religio-political. But it will not deprive any individual or group of its religious heritage or its scheme of values or its cultural tastes or its racial traits. The removal of barriers will allow greater mutual appreciation. It will lead to deeper co-operation and, hence, reciprocal respect. Whatever the contribution, it will be accepted nationally. When our categories are not mutually exclusive but all-inclusive, the smallest contribution will have wider significance. The minorities must come to see this.

When India is being drawn into the vortex of modern warfare, with all its horrors and destruction, factions and long-standing feuds and grudges

and soured misunderstandings will prove calamitous. Can nothing be done to cancel old debts, liquidate old bitterness, bridge old gulfs and rally every section of the Indian people to stand for the common cause, a common freedom, and a common future? Have the minorities been helped to feel it a *common cause*; to look upon the future as that which, in a free India, they will share in making; to realise their part in the honour, happiness, progress and well-being of a sovereign State? Why do the minorities need to be *helped* towards this realisation? Cruel circumstances, the tyranny of fear and the lack of educative propaganda by the Congress have combined to keep them tragically apart and aloof.

It is part of intelligent state-craft to understand the psychological factors, the economic conditions, and all those irresistible circumstances which have moulded the behaviour of minorities. Nationalists who oppose disruption are justified in their opposition only if they also do their utmost to reconcile dissentient groups. The task of reconciliation demands chivalrous heroes and heroines,

fearless in championing the cause of the weak, undaunted by opposition, unafraid in facing facts. When Nationalists become reconcilers India will become *Viristan*. We shall then face the enemy with courage and shoulder unpleasant tasks with the same courage. We shall be as chivalrous in confession as we are gallant in profession. It is not chivalrous to throw all the blame on the other community. It is not gallant to compel smaller, weaker groups to plead for compassion. India will be *Viristan*, the Land of the Brave, when we have the courage to see our own shortcomings ; when we have the courage to recognise why sections of our fellow countrymen have not stood by us in our hour of need, when we have the courage to build anew.

For instance, why have the Anglo-Indians behaved as they have, holding aloof, considering themselves in exile rather than at home in India? Racial inter-mingling often produces strange contradictions in the psychological make-up of people. It gives them irrational prejudices. These contradictions and prejudices can be modified by

education. But the system of education as it is in India has intensified these prejudices and has done nothing to unravel the contradictions. Thus there are heaps of Anglo-Indians who enjoy Indian food, but they will never confess it. Many an Anglo-Indian woman will wear a flashing Benarsi *sari* for a Fancy Dress Ball and win a prize, but she will not admit that she admires the *sari*. It must be remembered that the environmental factor has not provided a corrective either. They are more or less segregated in railway and factory colonies. The only Indians they meet are the servants, the box-walla, and tonga-walla, the milkman and postman, and the 'babus' in various offices. They have practically no chance of meeting that class of Indian which can command their respect and enlighten them. Imperialism has pampered their prejudices while rejecting their claims to racial equality with the British. They feel slighted. They compensate that wound to their self-respect by desperately clinging to a feeling of superiority to the Indian. Very few of the younger generation are pro-British

at heart. But very few of them are sure whether their past pride and race-feeling, the social and political indiscretions of earlier days, are forgotten and set aside by Indians. They are vacillating. They are unable to decide whether it will be safe to throw in their lot with nationalist India.

With a large majority of Indian Christians the economic factor has determined their isolationism. Many find it profitable to pass off as Anglo-Indians. Others find employment in Government or Mission service. In any case, their nationalist loyalty is smothered by golden cords. Most Indian Christians cannot afford to offend their pay-masters. They adopt views and beliefs that please the pay-masters. Whereas the Government demands a God-save-the-King kind of loyalty from its employees, the Missionary system to advertise the superiority of the Christian religion often encourages Mission servants to find fault with everything Indian. They are taught that the only solution for all India's problems lies in the rapid Christianisation of

the country. The fixed-bayonet reaction of the Arya Samaj does not mitigate its evil. It only incenses greater fury and creates greater resentment among all Christians. By all sorts of subtle means Indian Christian workers are taught that Christians must be loyal to the established form of government. Pauline texts are quoted freely. Revolutionary idéas are represented as unchristian. Thus most of them go through life with a muzzle of gold lace. But a few rebels have run away from the comfort, economic security, social position and popularity that would have been their's had they but bowed down and worshipped Cæsar. They have preferred poverty, insecurity and privations in order to preserve their moral integrity and independence of judgment. They are few. But, perhaps, they are significant. And it is significant that good Missionaries refer to them as 'proud', 'unable to get on with others,' etc., because they have that self-respect and rugged individualism needed to gird the soul against the temptation of compromise. Among them are

names honoured by all Indians, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, S. K. Rudra, J. C. Kumarappa, S. K. George, George Joseph, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and D. S. Ramachandra Rao. They have felt, and most of them have expressed themselves in no ambiguous terms, that the Gospel of Christ is the proclamation of justice, freedom and brotherhood and not a charter for exploiters, dictators and law-givers from across the Mediterranean or Atlantic. They have urged their comrades of the faith to fight political, economic, social and ecclesiastical injustice and domination and race and class discrimination wherever and whenever contacted. They have seen, from experience and careful observation, that the long-distance control of foreign funds is the root-cause of the evils in the Missionary system. They have urged the necessity of a radical reformation of this system as well as a transfer of control to Indians. They have pointed out that the establishment of the Indian Church, free from foreign censorship in its expression, is of more fundamental importance than all the diplomatic

negotiations for Church Union. An Indian theology can only emerge from such an Indian Church. Their reward, as they perhaps deserved, has been ostracism from Missiondom. Official Christianity has all but struck their names off the rolls. Whereas, actually those few Indian Christians, who suffered for their convictions, and not the "Yes-men" would have been the best assets of the Indian Church in a free India. But the Missionary machine has gone on unheeding, unrelenting. Can it survive ?

And if Missionary Christianity does not survive in a free India, will India be to blame ? In the heat of that moment the natural tendency for Missionaries, foreign supporters of Missions and many Indian Christians will be to charge Indians with ingratitude, totalitarianism, bigotry, and even vindictive hate. But will such charges be warranted ? When one considers how for centuries India has been hospitable to Christianity ; how Indians have tolerated the albinocracy which in every sphere of life has been tinged with insolence ; how India has been

scandalised by countless Missionaries 'home' on furlough while speaking to raise Mission funds; how Christianity has been made a tool of Imperialism in India; how the Missionary system has persecuted those foreign Missionaries and nationalist Christians who have demanded liberty, justice and equality in the name of the Christian Manifesto; how the economic control of Foreign Mission Boards has demoralised a large majority of "mission-compound" Christians in every part of India, can Indians be blamed for objecting to a repetition of such a tragic story in a self-governing India? Would America or Britain behave differently under these conditions? It is most unfortunate that the good that the Missionary Movement tried to do has been overshadowed by its albinocratic spirit which has made it a secret ally of British Imperialism.

Nevertheless, as it happens, most Indians are inclined to be thankful for small mercies and to philosophise even in the midst of a fight. So, perhaps, a free India will be disposed to temper justice with mercy and not visit the sins of the

Missionary Movement on the children of the Indian Church unto the third and fourth generation. But it will be well for the Indian Church (if, indeed, such a thing exists) to come out of the torpor induced by the opium of Mission funds and Missionary patronage and take its stand unequivocally on the side of freedom, justice and brotherhood, the eternal verities of the Christ-Revelation. Let Indian Christians as a community be up and doing now while it is yet day, for the night cometh when no man can work. It is yet not too late to realise that a religion of expediency is unworthy of Christians and unworthy of Indians. Truth is the highest religion. Ultimately, Truth alone triumphs.

The Parsis have given India Dadabhai Naoroji, Dinshaw Wacha and Pherozshah Mehta, three Presidents of the National Congress and three outspoken champions of Indian nationalism. Curiously enough, a large number of their community have not responded to their call. As a community, the Parsis, like other minorities, have fought shy of nationalist activi-

ties. While culturally, unlike the Anglo-Indians, they have accepted India as their home they have adopted Gujarati as their language. Many Hindu manners and customs mark their domestic and social life. Perhaps, the tepidity of Parsi nationalism has been caused mainly by the fact that economically many are involved in the Imperialist structure. They are like capitalists of other groups. But being largely a community of capitalists, the Parsis have become conspicuous. Their financial status has influenced their standard of living. A gulf has been created between them and the majority of their fellow-countrymen. Hence, the contradiction that while they are culturally Indianised they have social ambitions which make them adopt Western modes.

A clear understanding of the factors that have shaped the career of the minority communities enables us to realise that their career can be changed by modifying the conditions that affect their lives. It enables us to see that they deserve sympathetic treatment. Besides, it should

be realised that today there are many in every minority group who are dissatisfied with the past of their respective communities. They may not be articulate yet. But they are submitting themselves to rigorous heart-searching. They may not be leaders yet. But they are vaguely feeling about for some technique of reconstruction. They must not be repelled by any rashness on the part of Nationalists. They must be won for the cause of national integration. They must be encouraged to explore the real meaning of nationality and national allegiance. Through them their communities must be enthused to work for decommunalisation. Through them their communities must be shown the error of sub-national interests. Through them their communities must be liberated from complexes and inhibitions that are, perhaps, as painful to them as they are annoying to us.

In taking the initiative to win the confidence of the minorities, the Congress will be going beyond what is required or expedient. But it is just that extra urbanity, beyond what is

expedient or required which makes our dealing 'handsome'. The appeal of the President of the All-India Council of Indian Christians to the British Cabinet, "Pray, deal handsomely," should be an inspiration to the majority party in its relations with the minorities when India triumphantly determines her future, while overhead the Tri-coloured Flag floats on the Metropolitan air proclaiming: FREEDOM FOR ALL AND ALL FOR FREEDOM!

CHAPTER IX

WATAN—HOMELAND

For the last decade there has been a Goose-step contest in India. Experienced political homœopaths of Britain recommended that communalism would cure communalism. While the remedy was being tried through the agency of communal organisations the Bureaucracy started a Goose-step contest, presumably to divert the public mind. Some nationalist organisations soon joined only to begin goose-stepping in the opposite direction. The drastic disease of communalism needed drastic treatment. Most sensible people knew that. Many spoke of it with bated breath. But there was no one of Sri Rajagopalacharia's seasoned determination to face tar-bombs with a smile and go through a volley of vituperation unperturbed in order to start the drastic treatment. Those inclined to be religiously-minded awaited divine interven-

tion. Those socialistically-minded rushed to the Russian experiment for a panacea for all Indian ills.

But no one, neither Mahatma Gandhi nor Quaide-Azam Jinnah, neither Dr. Moonje nor Dr. Ambedkar, had the courage to stand up and proclaim to the nation that India is the *home* of every Indian, yea, every human being who lives within her precincts and loves her. India is not just a *Stan* or place. It is not merely the Land of the Indus or the Land of the Pure. It is our *Watan*. It is our homeland. It is where our forefathers lived and toiled and dreamed and fought and died so that their children may be free and happy. It is where our ancestors for long centuries have tilled the soil and woven fine cloth and made delicate ornaments of gold and silver; have loved and sung in the ecstasy of love; have carved beauty in marble that defies time and death; have filled the forest glades with memories of the great Quest; have kindled lamps in the dark with the witchery of their music and have dreamed their death-defying dreams of

Beauty and Love and Truth. Every inch of Indian soil is dear to us. Every patch of ground has its history. Every hill is a sentinel that guards some secret. Every river carries in its bosom some memory. And the history and the secret and the memory bind us together as Indians, as brothers, as those who have the same blood and the same Home, the same past and the same present and the same destiny. When will communal groups come to see that India is not just our country but our Home?

The Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League, the Gandhian Congressmen and Congress Socialists, and the Imperialists have curiously stumbled at the same point in their respective treatment of the question of inter-communal harmony. Each has concentrated on one aspect to the exclusion of the other three. The Mahasabha and League have rivetted their attention to the religious aspect and have demanded Hinduraj or Pakistan with religious fanaticism. The Gandhian Congressmen have concentrated on the political aspect and have insisted on 'majority ,

rule to be determined by a Constituent Assembly. The Congress Socialists and all their cousins to the tenth remove have focussed their thoughts on the economic aspect and have prescribed the 'classless society' as the cure. The Imperialists have been happy to get absorbed in the social aspect and have planned fortifications for the various socio-religious units in the form of the nefarious Communal Award.

Most champions of communal unity have been handicapped by the logic of their static approach. They have set out to treat the problem as *communal* rather than *inter-communal*. Their horizon has been narrowed. They have been able to see only the rival community in all its menacing antagonism. With one ear they have listened to the voice of reason while the other was filled with blatant communalist propaganda. They have kept one eye on the ideal of 'communal harmony' while the other was on their own communal rights, interests and insecurities. The welfare of their respective communities distracted their attention. In one bound they

tried to clear all obstacles. They preached an idealistic tolerance. But in the climate of *Realpolitik* idealism and tolerance had a poor chance to thrive.

Whereas, if it is approached as a problem of vital *inter-communal integration*, as it actually is, the need becomes one not of tolerant passivity but reciprocal initiative. Our horizon takes in the whole national panorama of human interdependence and inter-action, which sometimes will produce conflict. We are able to see that the inter-dependence can easily become a serious disadvantage to the smaller and poorer communities since they must of necessity be more dependent than the larger and richer ones. This in turn implies that the religious, political, social and economic life of the smaller communities will be at the mercy of the larger ones and that of the larger ones at the mercy of the largest one. Such a state of affairs, if left to itself, is bound to create an unhealthy inferiority-complex in the minority-communities which soon breaks out in a hundred sores of suspicion, resentment,

ill-will and hate. A communalist leader pole-vaults into popularity if he is practical enough and has the resources to start his community on a plan of self-sufficiency. If the plan works it redounds to his credit. If it fails, the blame is saddled on the rival community. In either case he succeeds in deepening the cleavage.

These generalisations may seem sweeping. They are meant only to keep the analysis from the blurring confusion of repeated modifications. It is true that the inter-dependence does not produce an inferiority-feeling among minority communities in all cases all over the country. It has been pointed out before that although the incongruities of the caste system are largely responsible for the origin and perpetuation of communities, there has been, nevertheless, a process of national integration, cultural, linguistic, racial and even social which has subconsciously weakened caste restrictions. It is true, therefore, that political tutoring is required to make communal groups aware of the sinister implications of inter-dependence mentioned above. Towns are more easily

accessible to propaganda and offer better facilities for organised political activity than villages. Hence, it has been comparatively easy in towns to bring the feeling of conflict to a head at Dassera or Muharram.

Modern psycho-analytical research shows that an inferiority-complex can be eradicated if the patient acquires self-confidence or a positive self-feeling. If this holds good for groups as much as for individuals, as observation inclines one to believe, then we have a reliable clue for the solution of the vexed problem of inter-communal harmony. Is there no way in which groups can come to acquire self-confidence? It cannot be done by leaving them religiously alone on the plea that the Congress represents everybody in this world and the next. It cannot be done by glib promises of constitutional safeguards, as conveniently forgotten as made. It cannot be done by proving the alleged grievances of aggrieved minorities baseless. And it cannot be done by throwing the whole bucketful of blame on the British Government, however

culpable its conduct may be. These four ways have been tried. They have failed pitifully. Indeed, they deserved to fail. They were wide of the mark.

Sometimes, as we have witnessed in our own generation, horribly cruel methods have to be adopted to eradicate an inferiority-complex from a people. The Nazis had to invent a Race-myth, launch pogroms of inhuman ferocity, and propagate a fanatical ideology of hatred and desperation so as to rid the German people of the paralysing inferiority-feeling that followed the Kaiserian disaster. Fortunately, there is still time for us to try less violent methods. But unless something is done now to arrest the progress of this disease of fear we too may find our minorities driven by desperate conditions to desperate action. Then to blame the minorities will be as sensible as blaming a house for falling in the rains when we neglected to put it right, to look after its cracks and its leakages, and to keep it from falling. An old house, if neglected, will fall. The minorities, if neglected, will act desperately. Let us be wise while yet there is time.

A systematic programme must boldly be put into effect if we wish to solve the 'communal' problem. Since the Congress is suffering its Babylonian Captivity, the responsibility devolves on nationalist organisations such as the Akhand Bharat Front to launch such a programme. It should be motivated by the single purpose of facilitating the historical process of the last twelve centuries and more. Broadly speaking it would have three aspects: Preparation, Participation, and Protection the three P's of creative unity.

The *preparation* aspect will include all the research and educative work. Scholars of outstanding reputation, of acknowledged intellectual honesty, and such as have no party-bias, should be commissioned to make exhaustive research in their departments on questions of racial fusion, religious inter-action, linguistic co-ordination and cultural synthesis and above all of economic inter-dependence. Such trained and reliable investigators should be set to work in every province to make accurate surveys of existing inter-com-

munal relationships, sociological permutations, and socio-economic interaction, especially in the vast and unspoiled rural areas. A small group of highly qualified historians, representative of all groups, should be entrusted with the task of making a thorough and impartial study of the origin and development of communal conflict, its root causes and its real patrons. If a sufficiently large number of the right type of men and women can be marshalled and the necessary financial resources are available, this preliminary spade-work should not take very long.

This would provide a wealth of invaluable and surprisingly convincing material which would then only need to be made available for the masses. At the weekly bazars, at fairs, at specially arranged mass-meetings this material could be broadcast in rural as well as urban areas. Magic lanterns and cinema films could be used very effectively for mass education. For those who can read, interesting pamphlets and booklets can be prepared in every vernacular. Local needs and local conditions would suggest various

methods of dissemination. Writers would use the material for stories and poems. Artists would draw on the material for pictures, posters and illustrations. A new type of songs and legends would grow up expressive of inter-communal harmony and goodwill.

Such a flood of knowledge will do much to wash away prejudices, suspicions and fears. It will throw down many a wall of partition unreasonably keeping men apart. It will enable tens of millions to look at human relationships in a new and truer light and recognise the fact that disunity is unnatural, wasteful and self-frustrating. It will strengthen the revolutionary spirit of those who have it and instil it into many who waver between a nebulous radicalism and an ambiguous orthodoxy. It will clear the way for countless youths towards inter-caste and inter-communal comradeship and put insurmountable obstructions in the path of obstructionists. It will blunt the edge of conservative objections and bring into sharp relief the myths paraded by disruptionists.

The *Participation* aspect of the programme will bring together those of all communities, especially Hindus and Muslims, to collaborate on carefully planned projects. Considerable vigilance will be needed in the planning of these projects to ensure that they are equally beneficial to *all* participants. For example, co-operative farming, spinning and weaving, bee-keeping, fishery and such other projects will offer excellent opportunities to representative inter-communal groups to work together and together share the fruits of their toil. Subsidiary cottage industries will furnish attractive projects to many other groups. Various areas will call for different enterprises. No project should seem to be an imposition. It should attract those for whom it is intended by making production as broad-based as possible rather than like a pyramid standing on its head. If such things are produced as are in all-round demand, they will be as good as ready money. Only thus can a maximum distribution of wealth be ensured: and the wider the distribution of wealth among the co-operative

workers the more successful the programme.

The temptation to moralise on the advantages of unity should be overcome with utmost strictness. The participants should be allowed to realise the advantages for themselves. Co-operative enterprises will have an incipient effect on those who share in the projects, binding them together in comradeship. They will begin to see that the barriers of caste and creed stand between them and prosperity. In concrete ways they will learn that mutual co-operation is the best safeguard for the security and well-being of the individual and the group. Each band of co-workers should be encouraged to live together in a colony. If one such colony is formed in each village of India, there will be some 700,000 inter-caste and inter-communal colonies all over the land proclaiming in daily routine the message of de-communalisation. In the presence of such an overwhelming host of incontrovertible witnesses, for each colony will be a living witness, disruptive propaganda will be stifled in the very throat of the propagandist.

The first phase will be wasted unless the second provides a million laboratories of actual collaboration in which the masses can test the validity of the knowledge broadcast to them. No sacrifice should be spared to make the participation successful. All too many comfortable idealists have waxed eloquent about Jacob's ladder dropping from heaven to earth and angels descending it to succour mankind. But mankind has only known gangsterism, highbrow and low brow. It is time that persecuted patriots build an empirical ladder from earth to heaven so that the 400 millions of India are able to ascend to that heaven which lies just beyond fear, ignorance, injustice and violence.

The aspect of *Protection* will include moral conscription and expansion of spheres of influence. As the conviction grows among the colonies of creative unity that interdependence means not the helpless dependence of victims but the co-operative reciprocity of equals, a new self-confidence will take the place of the fear that has hitherto made minority communities

suspicious. With the resurgence of self-confidence the quality of co-operative living will improve. It will not be difficult to enlist the active and moral support of these colonists against the perversities of communalism. If there are only ten families in each colony they would constitute a mammoth army of seven million men and seven million women among the Indian villages. Fourteen million men and women of various communities, equipped with the conviction that communal and caste barricades must be shattered, armed with accurate information and with first-hand experience of conscious co-operation, will take rural India by storm and bring it under their decommunalising influence. The strategic importance of the masses has been under-estimated all too long. They have a messianic role to play. They alone can save India from the 'scorched earth' policy of plunderers at bay.

Once the awakened masses of the rural hinterland have accepted the principle of creative unity, not for the sake of an ethereal, silver-fringed idealism, but rather for demonstrable

advantages mutually shared, it will be possible for them to convert the urban proletariat. The proletarian movement is already gaining ground. In fact, it is growing so fast as to alarm those who would like to preserve the *status quo* for the sake of its dividends and comfort. Proletarian action, in the form of *hartals* and strikes, is gaining greater momentum. Its power is being acknowledged by captains of industry everywhere. This phenomenal success is due to the solid unity among workers. There is a good deal of evidence to show that Trade Union membership is inter-communal. *Hartals* and strikes are organised on an inter-communal basis. Economic forces are breaking up the old and pernicious alignment of castes and communities. Scarcity of essential supplies, which is felt more acutely in towns, is drawing people nearer in a common bond of suffering. Food-crises and control-shops are breaking down artificial barriers. Bombs and shells show no communal partiality. The Bengal tragedy of starvation has stabbed those of every community and every caste and every

province into a keen new awareness of the way in which Nature levels all dividing walls. Even illiterate workers have begun to observe that epidemics and air-raids, famines and floods display no partisan feeling, no communal sympathy, but with callous indifference for all differences spread devastation and death all around. Peasants and workers, the rural and the urban masses, are coming to see more rapidly than could have been predicted that a common fate awaits them all, regardless of all distinctions that once seemed important. To get them to unite for consolidated action will be easier than many realise.

The combined might of the rural and urban *proletariat* will carry everything before it. It will achieve almost anything. With the right leadership, it can accomplish the immediate cessation of communal hostilities, the gradual dissolution of communal organisations, and the eventual abolition of castes and communities. The *proletariat*, rural or urban, has nothing to gain from the caste system and communalism.

The proletarian outlook is realistic enough to perceive that the fewer the barriers the better the chances for a freer, fuller life. Knowing this, the masses will not flinch from the hardest struggle to achieve decommunalisation. So long as our scientific and civic development has not reached the point when religion can be made a strictly private affair, religious associations must be left undisturbed. Only, these religious associations will no longer be able to impose social segregation or economic inequalities or political insularity. Temple bells and church bells may continue to strike the hour of prayer. The muezzin's mellow voice may continue to usher in the dawn of each new day. The *gurudwara* may continue to hold its colourful pageantry every Sunday. But Hindus and Muslims and Christians and Sikhs will no longer be divided in life. In the pursuit of their livelihood, in the pursuit of the good life, in the pursuit of individual and national progress, happiness and freedom they will be one and indivisible, owing one and indivisible allegiance to the one and indivisible Motherland.

Words cannot break down barriers. It is action that levels all differences. Words cannot unite. Men unite for action. Give them a truly worthy cause to fight for, and they will fight shoulder to shoulder, regardless of erstwhile distinctions which kept them apart. In his *Akhand Hindustan*, K. M. Munshi, former Home Minister of the Bombay Government, relates the touching story of Isa, a Muslim hero of Kathiawar. The Sumra of Sindh coveted the beautiful daughter of a Jat convert to Islam. In the fight which ensued between him and the Muslims over a thousand Muslims were killed. The Muslims sought the aid of the Parmaras. In battle after battle, hundreds of Hindu Parmaras and Muslim Jats gave their lives side by side for the honour of a Muslim maiden. On the hill of Mandava, the story runs, two men lay mortally wounded, Isa, a Muslim and his Hindu comrade. As his life was ebbing the Muslim saw his blood flowing to mingle with that of his Hindu friend. His sensitive friendship could not brook the possibility of his blood polluting

his comrade. With trembling hands, Isa made a little ridge of sand to divert the stream of blood. The Paramara saw this last act of loyalty. He could not bear to think that his Muslim friend should be parted from him at the last. With dying breath he pleaded: "Isa! remove the ridge! Let our blood mingle! Let us not be parted in death!"

This is India. This is the India which no Indian will allow to be divided. The rioting of gangsters, Hindu and Muslim, is a spurious by-product. Mutual friendship, mutual appreciation, reciprocal initiative are alive in the hearts of thousands of Isas and their Hindu comrades. Let the masses once be inspired, let them but have a chance of toiling together, and Hindus and Muslims and Christians and Anglo-Indians and Parsis and Sikhs and Harijans will unite and go forth as one mighty and invincible army singing as they march,

" Two hands are we to serve thee, O our mother,
To strive and succour, cherish and unite ;
Two feet are we to cleave the waning darkness,
And gain the pathways of the dawning light.
One heart are we to love thee, O our mother,
One undivided, indivisible soul,
Bound by one hope, one purpose, one devotion,
Towards a great divinely-destined goal ! "

Who, then, shall be able to keep India from that great divinely-destined goal of freedom, unity and strength ? Then with four hundred million shouts, that make the earth tremble, Indians shall storm the citadels of hate and fear and greed. To the earth-convulsing beat of a hundred million drums Indians shall then rout the powers of darkness. And the morrow shall find us a free people, free because brave enough to vanquish hate and greed and wrong. For only the brave deserve to be free.
